

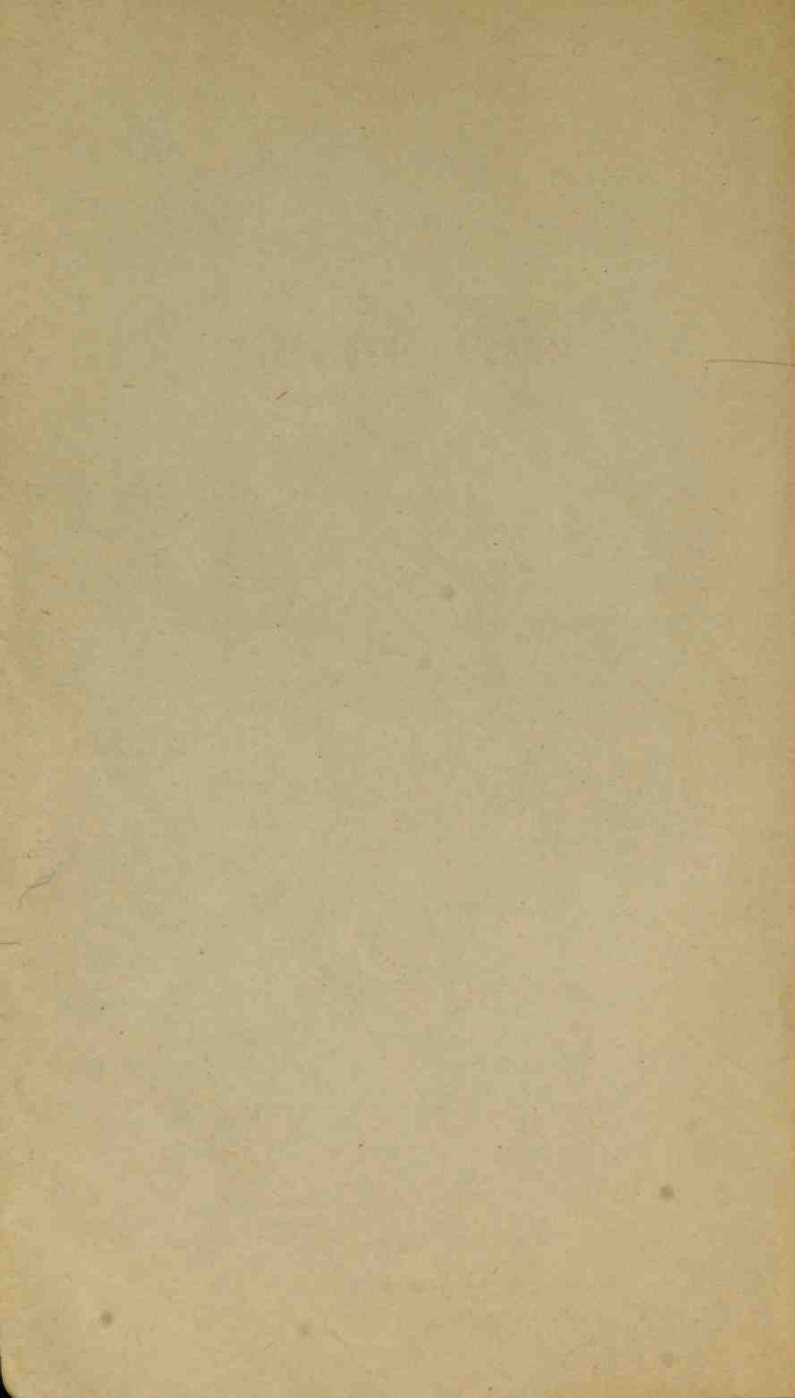
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ANATOLI GRANOVSKY

**I WAS AN
NKVD
AGENT**

**A TOP SOVIET SPY
TELLS HIS STORY**

I WAS AN NKVD AGENT



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A top Soviet spy tells his story

ANATOLI GRANOVSKY

*"The difficult can
be done at once;
the impossible
takes a little
longer."*

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

WESTERN ISLANDS



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LOS ANGELES

PREFACE TO THE PAPERBOUND EDITION

ANATOLI GRANOVSKY'S autobiographical account of his escape from Soviet hell is a fascinating story.

One cannot guess at the solitary strength required of a man who breaks with the NKVD—the Soviet's secret security police. Trained up from youth in such coldly systematized espionage, subversion, murder and terror—having experienced little else—how does one know that there is something so much better that it is worth all kinds of additional hell in order to escape?

It must be that no evil is impenetrable to good, no iron net of lies can be woven so tightly as to repel the lance of truth, no darkness can be made so thick as to be impervious to light.

There are episodes in the training of an NKVD agent described herein which are repugnant to those of us who cherish Western attitudes of civilized restraint as touching on the sanctity of the individual and the inviolate areas of private life. But the raw, primitive enemy we face overlooks no weapon in its demoniac drive to subjugate the civilized world, returning it to new dark ages. We had best know about *all* of these weapons. One may dislike to see how ugly are some parts of the world—but we are obliged to look even though it hurts the eyes.

In the course of his escape, Granovsky received much help. For a long list of persons to whom the author acknowledges his debt and for a center section of illustrations helpful in gaining a full appreciation for this story see the hardbound edition published by Devin-Adair Company in 1962.

The book is published in its present form for one overpowering reason. It is to supply another valuable weapon to the arsenal of truth—and supply it at a price which millions can afford. For if enough good people are made aware of the truth—the truth in time—and know how deep is the nighttime wherever men succumb to Communist conquest, good men will *act* and civilization, instead of dying, may rise to its finest hour.

THE PUBLISHERS

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PART ONE

SON OF THE PARTY

ONE

REFUGE

IT WAS around ten o'clock at night on November 8, 1946, when the night Supervisor came into my cell on his nightly round of the Swedish prison. I had already tried to eat my dinner but with little success. I sat still on the edge of my bed and watched him approach. His face was grave and serious as it always was. I felt as if my stomach were contracting to about the size of a walnut. He nodded to me and was about to speak when a man came up and had two or three seconds' conversation with him. It seemed like two or three hours. Then he turned to me and said out loud to the warder standing a little way behind him. "Open the door." I had to wait again as the cell door was opened. Then he gave me his hand and smiled. It was the most wonderful smile I have ever seen.

"You have won," he said. "His Majesty King Gustaf V has approved your asylum."

I could not say anything. I tried, but could not. Nor could I prevent the tears from welling into my eyes and coursing down my cheeks. It was no good trying. I sat down on my bed again and put my head in my hands to hide my overwhelming relief.

"Excuse me, Sir," I said finally. "This means a lot to me."

I felt his hand pat me lightly on the shoulder. He wished me goodnight and walked out.

He left the door of the cell open.

I was out of hell.

TWO

THE REVOLUTION

FOR ME, I think, it all started with my uncle Alexei. I never knew him except from the bits and pieces that my father told us about him years after he had taken the step which set the course of our lives. Had it not been for him it is more than likely that I would have been born into another land, another world. For my grandfather was wealthy and a liberal, but loyal to the Czar. When he sent my uncle to Europe he never dreamed of the consequences his stay there would have.

My uncle Alexei left Vinitsa Province in the Ukraine and traveled by road and rail to Germany. No doubt he felt as all young Russian gentlemen felt when they went abroad in those days: eager, excited and a little frightened of the label of "barbarous Russian." Europe was polish, Europe was a broadening of the mind, and although he would probably be homesick at times it would be worth it. After all, his French was very good, and what language was more civilized and polished than that? People were polite and respectful to a foreigner who spoke French.

When my uncle returned from abroad a few short years later he was a different man indeed. He had become almost taciturn; he listened politely enough when people spoke to him concerning things of the district and the news of the moment but as though it was almost a condescension. He went about alone a great deal and had ceased, as it were, to share himself with others. His people, without being able to explain it, were disturbed by the change. The beard he had taken to wearing was the least objectionable characteristic he seemed to have acquired.

One day my uncle Alexei took my father, his younger brother by a few years, for a walk in the country.

"You know I was in Zürich for a while, brother Mickail," he said.

"I remember from your letters, brother," said my father.

"Can you imagine whom I met while I was there?"

"Tell me, brother," said my father.

"I met Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov Lenin."

My father stopped short in his tracks.

"Lenin? But, Alexei, this is wonderful. What is he like? How did it happen?"

Uncle Alexei took my father's hand and pressed it hard between his own.

"You are becoming a man, little brother Mickail," he laughed. "I knew I was not wrong when I decided to tell you. But," he added seriously, "this must remain between us."

The two young men talked a long time after that, but the pact had been made at the first handclasp. From then on they were partners in secrecy, a secrecy which made an invisible barrier between them and their parents, their remaining brother and three sisters. But it was no secret to many other men, some known already and some who used names that were not theirs but to whom men listened with the greatest respect. There were countless meetings held in the back rooms of restaurants, where, in hushed voices, the more experienced led the less experienced, and there was a great deal of talk about the dawn of truth, the dawn of justice, the dawn of freedom, and there, too, the Book was interpreted. Questions were asked and answered; and the slow and less intelligent were encouraged because they, too, would be needed.

That was the first stage.

Later there were more important things to be seen to. In 1915, at the age of eighteen, my father became a member of the Communist faction of the Social Democratic Party. He was inflamed with awareness of social injustice, the romance of revolution and the revelation of the Cause.

Our country was at war with Germany, and the Russian troops under the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich were suffering severely. He was said to be a great soldier, but he was an aristocrat. As the war progressed the Party did its utmost to see that the troops at the front had less clothing, less food, less clean water and, finally, practically no ammunition. By the time the Revolution came it was practically assured of success.

My father gave himself to it wholeheartedly but he was

alone now, as my uncle Alexei had contracted tuberculosis and was very weak; he died soon after. The family rapidly disintegrated. My grandfather's property was confiscated by the State and the old couple left destitute and disillusioned. The old man did not survive the shock of knowing that two of his sons were on the side of the plunderers. Perhaps his mind was too narrow to envisage the greater good emanating from his own immediate impoverishment. The property that he and his forefathers had acquired and administered was gone.

To my father, of course, this was quite proper because it was "necessary"—a word used a great deal in those times. We had to move on, and on, even if only to find out where mankind was going. We were creating a new order because the old order was intolerable. The new order could not be more intolerable than the old—it was too full of hope. In the blood of the oppressor was the hope of the oppressed.

There was blood in Presnea. So much that that district of Moscow has since been called Red Presnea. This was my father's baptism in the new order. The crack and rattle of rifle and machine-gun fire, and men with hats on and dark overcoats, like city clerks gone mad, running across streets in little groups with bombs to destroy the barricades.

Order came, or a semblance of it, and my father returned to the university to study chemical engineering. In due course he graduated with honors and joined the Red Guard to take an active part in the civil war that still raged in many parts of the country. His dedication to the cause never waned.

At twenty-two years of age he became Deputy President of the Gubsovnarkhoz (Provincial Soviet of People's Property) of Chernigov Province. It was when he held this post that he met my mother.

Early in 1921 my father made a journey into Byelorussia to attend to official business. One night the extreme severity of the weather delayed him and he found himself stranded without transport somewhere on the outskirts of Minsk. He trudged up to a nearby house, presented himself and asked shelter for the night.

It was a comfortable, roomy house inhabited by the widower Kolosov and his three daughters. Kolosov had once been the steward of a vast estate and was now forest administrator for the area. But the old man interested my father

a good deal less than did one of his daughters, a very beautiful young woman called Zinaida. She, too, felt that my father's visit was quite an auspicious event in the quiet where they lived and took pains to make him feel comfortable and at home. I believe they retained very clear and definite impressions of each other during that evening, and it was with reluctance that my father left the house on the following morning to proceed on his journey.

My father was gone, but Zinaida was neither able nor willing to forget him. On the contrary, as time went by she became more and more eager to see him again. Finally she made up her mind and, on some pretext or other, went to Chernigov to look for my father.

On maturer reflection I do not believe that in those days my father ever gave much thought to marriage. The urgency of the times, the call on men's ability and willingness to work unceasingly to forge order out of chaos was not likely to conduce to a happy married life. Zinaida, however, did not feel that way about marriage at all, and, as women sometimes have arguments that do not need words, her point of view prevailed and my father married her. I was born a little less than a year later.

My father's star rose steadily. Soon he was sent to Khar'kov and appointed head of the Ukrogossirt (Ukrainian State Spirits and Alcohol Industries Section). He held this post until Lenin's death in 1924, after which he was promoted to a post in Moscow as chief of the Prodosilicat (National Board of Glass, Ceramics and Allied Industries). He had also become a member of the Central Executive Committee.

THREE

BEREZNIAKI

AS I look back to the beginnings of my own recollections, memories come flooding to my mind. I remember the color of my mother's hair in the firelight, the breadth of my father's shoulders from behind as he settled himself to work at his desk; I remember the warmth of warm, dark bedrooms, the flutter and soft padding of snow on windows as I lay on soft, receiving mattresses. I remember the awe I felt for my father, the fearful love I bore him and the feeling of safety and assurance that he inspired—when I was good.

My memory is the best-developed attribute I have. I can remember from the time I was five in a continuous line until now with practically no lapses of consequence.

In 1927 we all—that is, my father, mother, younger brother Valentin and myself, then aged five—lived in Moscow at 14/6 Pokrovsky Boulevard on the corner of Vuzovsky Street. I remember we used to have a governess to look after Valentin and me; and although I did not think of it then, I realized later that this was a luxury my father permitted my mother, believing that his position and his firm friendship with Ordjonikidze, Politburo member and People's Commissar for Heavy Industry, placed him more or less beyond the pale of idle criticism. For although he was in fact employing someone, he was not exploiting that person's labor for his own material profit. This would have been a cardinal sin.

The governess was a German woman whose name had been russified to Karina Petrovna and she was strictly instructed not to attempt to impart to us any religious nonsense she might believe in. The word "God" was strictly taboo. Later, since it was not yet possible then for anyone to live many years without coming across the word here and there, it would be explained and defined as a bourgeois invention used to help them in their conspiracy to dominate

and control the workers. For as long as possible, however, it was my father's intention that we should be kept as isolated as possible from the risk of contamination.

The injunction, however, proved too difficult for worthy old Karina Petrovna to follow. She was of peasant stock, and with such people God is as real as the heart in the body. It was an idea, as everyone knew then, that would have to be overcome slowly by sheer weight of reason and force of propaganda. But poor Karina, in any moment of anxiety or annoyance, could find no interjection that did not include the name of her maker. It was forever "Good God save us!" or "For the love of the Holy God!" etc. We did not tell anyone about this, although I already knew then from my normal contact with other children that God was out, without even having any idea at all what God was. But we used her indiscretions mercilessly as weapons against her, threatening to tell our parents if she did not do this, that or the other for us. When we went out for walks we sometimes passed dilapidated buildings with an odd air of shabby grandeur about them, usually being used as warehouses, which we also knew had once had something to do with this God. When we saw these buildings we used to draw Karina's attention to them and laugh, and she used to shake her head and mutter things under her breath.

One day, when out with us, she committed another indiscretion which was far more serious.

We chanced to pass a sugar store, outside of which there was a long queue of people waiting patiently to be served. Now, in government stores, or rather in the stores reserved for government personnel where we did all our shopping, there was never any waiting and there was always plenty of everything. The great difference between an ordinary store and one reserved for government personnel was immediately apparent to the most superficial eye. Karina drew our attention to the long line of people, standing cold and docile, outside the sugar store.

"Look at those poor people," she said. "Some of them will wait an hour for their pound of sugar, if they get it, while we get everything we want. You are very lucky boys. I don't know what happens these days, but it was never like this before the war."

What had Karina said? She had said that the old things

were better than the new. I was filled with a sense of excited importance, as if I had caught a thief single-handed and both I and my brother rebuked her loudly for what she had said. She entreated us to forget it, saying she did not mean anything of the kind, but our sense of triumph, a cruel, animal triumph, was too great and when we got home we told father and mother what had happened.

There were no remonstrances, no further questions. Karina Petrovna was dismissed without references. She was told to pick up her belongings and go. There can be no doubt that, with nowhere to work and nowhere to live, she very soon joined the legion of beggars that infested Moscow in those days.

At that time I was six years old.

I remember that the day after we lost Karina Petrovna was November 7, a day of great parades in commemoration of the proletariat revolution. At eight o'clock in the morning it was cold and the air had the fine crystal clarity of an autumn morning. In those days there was little or no protocol and, as far as the pavilions for government personnel were concerned, those who arrived first took the best places commanding the widest view over the Red Square. The seats were simply rows of wooden benches, and Lenin's tomb was still only a wooden structure.

We arrived there early and so were not only close to Lenin's tomb but were well placed to witness the march-past in the Square. I remember Stalin ascending to the saluting base on the tomb. He was dressed in a rumpled military overcoat, and his retinue of Politburo members, secretaries and bodyguards presented an interesting variety of costumes, some being in uniforms and others in civilian suits of many drab colors and with very little more idea of style than might be expected in a nightwatchman's working outfit. Of course I knew nothing of style then, but the vision is with me still and the elements for comparison have been acquired since.

The troops that marched past, too, presented a shocking sight—for all their vast number they scarcely resembled an army at all. Their clothes were ill-fitting, their marching was ragged and they were armed to the teeth like story-book bandits. But they seemed to be enjoying themselves. There was a spring in their step and they shouted their slogans at

the tops of their voices. I had cause to remember this in particular many years later when I saw such another parade on another 7th of November.

About a year later, in the autumn of 1929, my father received a coveted appointment from the Sovnarkom (Council of People's Commissars). He was nominated chief of the construction and development of the great Berezniakovsky chemical manufacturing combine at Berezniaki, planned as the largest in the Soviet Union and given top-priority in the first Five Year Plan. Almost immediately he set out to assume his new post, arranging for the rest of the family to follow him only in the following spring so that we should be spared the inconvenience of traveling during the intense cold.

I was attending day school at the time at school number 18 opposite the barracks on Pokrovsky Boulevard, and when my studies were interrupted in April I was happy and excited.

My father sent an orderly to accompany us down and this stout fellow not only took charge of the whole operation, like a sergeant-major does when his company is on the move, but showed inexhaustible patience with Valentin and myself, telling us stories, playing with us and keeping us company. We went by rail as far as Perm in comfortable Pullman coaches, and from there by river boat to Berezniaki. It was a delightful journey. From the windows of the train Valentin and I looked entranced at the scene changing before us—the glistening early morning frost on the ground, the little farms with their untidy yards mostly empty of animals; here a cow, there a goat or maybe a couple of geese. And then the little villages, huddles of log houses with thatched or boarded roofs. It took us altogether four days.

My father was at the quayside to meet us, together with a large delegation of the district notables. The welcome was effusive as befitted the wife and children of the most important man for miles around.

We were driven in a Ford car to our new home, the top floor of a large wooden house, and all those who had met us followed to drink a toast in vodka to our homecoming. There was much talking and laughing and our heads were patted avuncularly by a number of burly men. The house had been liberally warmed by fires that must have been

burning half the day, and there was a smell of new paint and a freshness that came from the pine forests not far off.

I was vaguely excited and it seemed like the beginning of a new era for me. I did not know that it was also, to some extent, the end of innocence.

FOUR

THE ASCENDING STAR

THERE IS a day I remember very clearly. We were at breakfast. My father was already at work.

"Tolya, let's go and look at the *ulonovtsi*," said Valentin. "You will do no such thing. I've told you before I don't want you going anywhere near those horrible creatures," my mother admonished severely.

"But, mother," I said, "they are everywhere. Why, we can even see some from our window."

"Well, let that be enough for you, then."

Valentin and I exchanged covert glances. We had no intention of obeying our mother, but there was a tacit understanding that Valentin had been careless to broach the subject before her and there was no further point in laboring the issue. She would soon be busy with her reading and her dressmaking and we could go where we liked.

Later we put on our caps and coats and fled the house.

"You must remember, Valentin," I said, "that mother is a woman. She is soft and does not understand these things like a man does. Don't be such a fool again."

Valentin was always a mild-mannered little fellow and accepted my authority without question.

"I won't, Tolya," he said.

Soon we had rounded a bend in the clay road and came upon an already familiar scene. We walked a little nearer, still remaining on the road, and stopped to look.

Across a stretch of open ground and about eighty yards from where we stood was the stone face of a quarry at the foot of which lay great jagged chunks of stone that had been blasted out. All around these boulders were gangs of people working, breaking and hauling the stone. They were not ordinary laborers. None was fully clothed and many were almost entirely naked. There were almost as many women as men. Most of them were bent and thin and

moved with a grotesque sluggishness like people on the brink of death. It was gruesome and oddly fascinating. These were the *ulonovtsi*. Standing among them and around them in strategic positions were uniformed men of the OGPU armed with rifles and pistols.

What we were witnessing was a detachment of slave laborers at work. Little thought was given to the nourishment of the *ulonovtsi*, and their shelter was worse than miserable. It did not matter if they died off like flies, for there were millions of them to draw from. They were petty landowners and their families, erstwhile employers, political prisoners of all sorts, convicted enemies of the people. Many thousands worked on the Berezniakovsky project under the control of the ULON (Section of Special Purpose Camps).

While we watched we heard a high-pitched wailing noise and saw that it issued from a ragged bundle at the foot of a dead tree. At the sound a young woman dropped her wheelbarrow and started running towards the tree. I realized it was her child that was crying. There was something in the air. Suddenly fascinated, I watched her hesitate as a guard called loudly for her to take up her wheelbarrow. But she ignored the guard and ran on. The distance was not above twenty yards and everything happened in the time it took her to run that distance.

"Come back, you bitch!" the guard called out angrily.

But the woman, with a deaf, desperate stubbornness, ran on and bared her breast to suckle the child. She reached the tree and dropped, kneeling, one white breast round and ready for the hungry child. The guard raised his rifle and shot her, twice. She fell without a sound. No one went to her, no one looked. Even the guard had already turned his back. And the child continued its nagging wailing.

There was a sound beside me and I turned to see Valentin very white in the face and about to vomit. I took him by the arm and we started to walk home in silence. Finally he spoke.

"How awful, Tolya," he said. "It made me feel sick."

"You are a baby, Valentin," I answered.

The *ulonovtsi* were confined in a cluster of desperately overcrowded shacks surrounded by barbed wire in the *taiga*. The camp was some four miles from where we lived and the slaves were marched out to their work early in the

morning and back at night in long, slow columns, the guards marching alongside them with guns at-the-ready and with trained dogs on leashes. In the camp, at intervals along the high barbed-wire fence, there were observation towers with searchlights and machine-guns mounted on them. Every reasonable precaution was taken to ensure that no break-outs should occur.

Nevertheless, one night something did happen.

A small detachment of prisoners was being marched back to camp exceptionally late one night in the charge of three guards with one dog. The guard with the dog, presumably not looking where he was going, tripped over the leash and fell to the ground, dropping his rifle. In a flash, almost as if he had acted by animal instinct, the prisoner marching closest to the guard broke ranks, kicked the sprawling guard in the face and snatched his rifle. The dog attacked him but the prisoner clubbed it to death with furious blows of the rifle butt. By the time the second guard had realized something was wrong and run round the squad to see, the prisoner had the rifle ready and shot him. But the third and last guard, approaching from a different direction, was able to shoot the prisoner in the back.

Control over the prisoners was lost, but most of them were too stunned to do anything but stand still and stare. Not all, however. One man flung himself from behind on the one remaining guard while another instantly picked up one of the abandoned rifles and removed the guard's weapons at gun point. They then clubbed the guard to death, and they were free—at least for a while.

There is a lesson to be learned, now I think of it, from what happened afterwards.

Of the forty odd men and women remaining in the detachment, only seven men and two women decided to avail themselves of the situation and escape. The rest were so beaten already, so degraded and so hungry that they marched on alone to the camp.

Of the nine who ran off two, a man and a woman, were caught the next day in Zirianka village, across the river from the camp. The thirty-one who returned to camp were punished for having allowed their comrades to escape without hindrance. The two who were caught were executed. And the other seven? I don't know. I was told many times, and believed it, that they would assuredly be caught. But I never

actually heard that they had been. It is possible, just very remotely possible, that they were not.

In any event, after that incident my father forbade us to go anywhere near where the *ulonovtsi* worked or lived unless it could not be avoided, in which case we must be properly accompanied.

In September 1932, when the first stage of construction work at Berezniaki was nearly complete, we all took a six weeks' holiday in Sochi, the well-known Caucasian summer resort. We stayed in the rest colony reserved for members of the Soviet Central Executive Committee.

This rest colony takes up about five miles of sea front and rather under a mile of ground inland. The climate, as is general on the shores of the Black Sea, is wonderfully temperate and constant and could not be better suited for a tired man on holiday. The main gates give out onto the Caucasian Riviera and there a sentry checks your papers and salutes as you enter. Immediately beyond is the area reserved for sports, with tennis courts, croquet lawns, basketball courts and so on neatly laid out and separated by wide beds of well-kept flowers and neatly tended footpaths. Then comes the area devoted to night life and indoor entertainments. There is a large dance hall, an open-air and an indoor cinema, billiards saloons and a number of rooms for card games, chess and draughts. There is also a spacious restaurant beyond which is the communal kitchen. The residential area which follows comprises some thirty-two four to five-bedroom houses each set in a plot of ground some four hundred yards square and screened off one from the other by lines of trees, their lawns and gardens meticulously cared for by a small regiment of gardeners. The most remarkable feature about the houses is that none of them has a kitchen. No cooking is done in the houses at all as all meals are ordered from the communal kitchens. At any time of the day or night a servant may be sent to get piping hot food which is delivered on a tray under a gleaming insulated cupola. There is never, of course, any question of payment or signing of bills for anything ordered.

All through the colony are roads for automobiles and two separate systems of footpaths, one being for the residents and the other for the domestic and service personnel, so that servants were rarely seen bearing their loads of food to their masters. At the far end of the residential area are five houses

that differ from the others in that they have three floors instead of two. These are reserved for use by Politburo members and overlook the fruit gardens and orchards of the colony, where grow peaches, apples, pears, apricots, grapes, oranges and tangerines in well-tended profusion, and then beyond these, the last feature of the colony, except for the beach itself, the magnolia woods.

Children were not really allowed in the magnolia woods, but it was quite easy to slip in over the wall. It was a delightful place, and looked after in such a way as to allow a subtle impression of complete and timeless abandon. Moss grew at the feet of the benches and up the sides of rustic summer houses, and the bed of the wood was covered with a soft carpet of leaves.

The colony beach was amply equipped with sun-bathing tents, massage rooms and showers. There was one shower known as Sharkovski shower. It had a jet of phenomenal power which an attendant directed at one's body in accordance with a prescribed rhythmic movement while one gritted one's teeth and held on for dear life to stanchions cemented into the wall.

During this first visit to the colony in Sochi we met several leaders of almost legendary importance in the Soviet Union. Among them were Voroshilov, People's Commissar for War and Naval Power, and Mickail Ivanovich Kalinin, President of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union.

It is interesting that even though the rest colony was completely walled off from the surrounding areas and was heavily guarded on the outside by troops of the OGPU, Voroshilov and Kalinin were specially guarded inside. Their guards, at all times three for each, were on duty in shifts during the twenty-four hours of the day and accompanied their charges everywhere, even into the water for a swim.

Before the time for my father's vacation had fully expired, he was called unexpectedly to Moscow, whither we all accompanied him. Father at once became very busy. Rarely did we see him for luncheon, never for dinner, and from the few words he spoke to us at breakfast we knew he was having daily meetings and conferences with people whose names possessed for us then a magic excitement. Kuibishev, Ordjonikidze, Voroshilov, Molotov, even Stalin

himself. They were great men. What careers were theirs! What power!

As a result of all this came his nomination as Chief of the *Kamstroi*, which was the name given to the project for building a giant explosives and cellulose factory in the region where the Kama river joins the Volga, not far from the town of Perm. It was to be an enormous industrial enterprise where, it was calculated, upwards of a hundred thousand people would eventually be employed.

We immediately set about leaving for Perm, and arrived there to find a staff of hundreds of engineers, technicians and others all waiting for the signal to start work. My father gave no such signal but first decided to carry out a thorough examination of conditions *in loco*. The rest of the family remained quartered in Perm town. My father's investigation led him to the conclusion that this was not the proper site for the project as the supply of raw material there would be too costly. He thereupon returned to Moscow to make his report, as the result of which the entire project was abandoned and the large, idle staff dispersed.

So we returned to Berezniaki where my father took charge of the expansion of the plant as prescribed in the second Five Year Plan.

Things went very smoothly. We were frequently visited by high authorities of the Soviet government, all of whom, such as Voroshilov, Molotov, Kalinin and Ordjonikidze, were Politburo members. The single exception was Raitachak. They were guarded by senior members of the OGPU, who, of course, had to be given our hospitality in every way like their charges. In due course the plant was named after Voroshilov and, as its production met all requirements, my father was awarded the highest Soviet honor of the time, the Order of Lenin. Simultaneously, and in more material token of the State's appreciation, he was given a 1932 model Buick limousine.

On July 20, 1934, my youngest brother was born and my father called him Vladimir, after Lenin.

Two months later we went again to Sochi for a short holiday.

When we arrived we heard that Stalin was also in Sochi, although naturally he did not stay in the rest colony but lived in his own summer residence near Matsesta on the other side of Sochi town, a house known to us as "number

seven." But his secretary Poscrebishev lived next door to us in the colony.

Molotov, with his wife Jemchujina and daughter Svetlana, was also there, in one of the big houses, and they were later joined by Voroshilov and Andreyev. For some reason the personal bodyguards of these leaders had been doubled since our previous visit.

I was then nearly thirteen years old and already quite strong enough to compete with adults in certain games. Lately, at Berezniaki, I had learned how to play tennis with tolerable skill and here in Sochi I found an unexpected partner in Poscrebishev. We played a few games and Poscrebishev asked me to meet him at the courts on the following day for a few sets before lunch. I was quite overjoyed for I hoped that, in the rest intervals between sets, I would get a chance to ask him a few questions about the great leader Stalin. I told father with whom I was to play next day and was immediately discouraged when he said: "Good for you, but on no account ask him any questions about comrade Stalin. Remember he is a very busy man and most important. He must not be annoyed by idle questions concerning his job or his chief."

So I did not ask Poscrebishev anything. But I could not help being amused and rather impressed when, in the middle of a game, a high-ranking OGPU officer appeared, as if out of the ground, walked straight across the court to Poscrebishev and said, quite distinctly, "The boss wants you now."

Poscrebishev threw me his racket, asking me to keep it for him, and went off at a fast walk to a car which drove him off at breakneck speed.

It was an enjoyable holiday. I did not like Svetlana Molotov (she was about half my age anyhow) but I met and made friends with several boys whom I would know better later on. There was Yuri Dibets, whose father was chief of the Gorki Molotov car factory, and Igor Peters, son of the first chief of the bloody Petrograd Cheka, the secret police of the period that immediately followed the Revolution, and at the time of my meeting his son chief of a special section of the Party's Central Committee in Moscow, a very important post indeed. And there was Vassily, Stalin's son.

Finally it was time for us to return, all too soon, to Berezniaki. When we arrived, our new home had been com-

pleted. It was a large mansion set in its own landscaped grounds and would be the official residence of the present and all future directors of the Voroshilov combine.

We held the housewarming on November 7, the anniversary of the proletariat revolution. The grounds were soon full of the cars and horse-drawn coaches of all the leading officials and authorities for many miles around and a gay party was held lasting late into the night.

The building was presented to us fully furnished and most splendidly decorated. The interior walls were paneled up to about five feet from the floor and above that were painted with mural designs. All the finest china-ware, silver, linen and everything needed to make a princely home had been provided at not a kopec's cost to my father. Incidentally, apart from this, my father had a five-room apartment reserved for him in Moscow, which he had scarcely seen in four years, a summer house forty miles from the plant, likewise scarcely ever visited, another at the Sochi rest colony, three cars at his disposal, one of them his own, horses and a motorboat, while all food and clothing, furniture, fittings and appurtenances for his houses were supplied without the slightest demand on his pocket. By any standards, we lived the lives of wealthy people.

Meanwhile the workers who labored in the plant lived in rude barracks made of wood, which provided inadequate shelter against the rigors of the climate. They were so poor that they scarcely had a change of clothing. They had to share their homes with others and had to buy their own food and pay rent.

I personally found no injustice or hypocrisy in all this, but was quite happy to take it all for granted. We belonged to that paradoxical and secret thing, the aristocracy of the classless Soviet society. And, after all, the old slogan of "from each according to his means and to each according to his needs" had been changed already, officially, to read "from each according to his ability and to each according to his deeds." My father controlled, canalized and directed the brute production potential of tens of thousands of human creatures. Without him their work would have had no unity, no successful bulk achievement, so it was more than just that he and his family should be kept free of the petty worries of survival to which less capable and less useful men must naturally be subject.

Less than a month later came the bombshell, the force and shock of which I was just old enough to sense. Sergey Kirov, one of the most powerful as well as one of the most popular Politburo members and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, was shot in the back of the head by an unknown assassin.

The news made a subtle change in everything. People suddenly started to act as though they had been told by their doctors that they suffered from a malignant growth which might, or might not be cancer. There was a general suspension of opinion and speculation. Men just waited. But it was soon established that the Trotskyists had done it. It was a name I was not very familiar with, except to know it indicated something despicable. I accepted what I was told and was prepared to forget the whole incident, little knowing what had been started by that single shot.

I soon did forget, for a while, for new things were occurring in high circles in which my father was involved. The extension of railroad communications had to be drastically stepped up. Stalin dismissed Andreyev and replaced him with Kaganovich with the special title of "Stalin's People's Commissar for Railroad Transportation."

My father was called upon and appointed chief of the Central Section for the Construction of Railroads. He was getting very close to the top.

A comrade called Brodov succeeded father at the plant and we prepared to depart for Moscow. The Berezniaki we left was very different from that which we had encountered when we arrived five years before. Then it had been a little town surrounded by forest and marsh and boasting three stone houses, the rest being of wood. Now it was a thriving industrial hive in which lived 75,000 workers and their families.

Many people came to see us off at the station as we prepared to leave in our special coaches, all smiling and wishing us well. Some of the workers too came out of curiosity and stood staring at us from a little way off. Their faces were blank and expressionless.

FIVE

THE MOSCOW TRIALS

BUT IF it was pleasant for me to return to Moscow, for my mother it was like the realization of a dream of heaven. She exulted in her return from "exile" in Berezniki to "civilization" in the metropolis. Moscow for her meant luxury, theaters, the ballet, social functions, balls and conversation. My father had little aptitude for conversation as my mother understood it. To him it was something to be indulged in sparingly and always as a means to an end, while to her it was an end in itself, like an art. Now this was not a typically Soviet concept at all; old Russian perhaps, but not Soviet. Nonetheless, the failing was less important in a politically inactive wife than in a man prominent in political and administrative life and so, to my knowledge, my father never troubled to discourage in mother what he felt was an idle tendency, although he was no help himself to her in her practice of it.

But apart from this, Moscow is a metropolis, a capital city, and this alone made it dear to mother, for she had known another well and loved it, too. Some twenty years before, she had lived in Paris while still a girl. I knew Paris only through my mother's eyes. Not only was it twice the size of Moscow, she said, but also very much older and more than twice as civilized. I would one day be able to go there, I thought, as soon as France joined the Soviets.

After a short stay in Pushkino suburb we moved into apartment 417 in the government apartment building on Serafimovich Street, 2. It was across the Moskva river from the Kremlin and near the Stone Bridge. Just across the river, too, was the rubble remaining from the recent dynamiting of the ancient church of Christ the Savior which had been razed to make room for the projected Palace of Soviets, to be the biggest building in the world.

The building in which we were to live had twelve floors

and took up an entire city block. It had twenty-five entrances, 505 large apartments, a cinema, the first to show talkies in the U.S.S.R. (called *Udarnik*, shock worker), a special theater for children, barbers' shops, a laundry and a general government store. All these things were reserved for and used exclusively by the families of 505 leading Soviet government officials. There were seven courtyards in the building and during the night these were filled with about seven hundred cars, as some of the residents had more than one car, either donated to them as rewards or put at their disposal by the State. The inhabitants were well guarded day and night by a company of blue-uniformed guards who were stationed at all entrances and in all courtyards. As part of their duties they had to be able to recognize and know by name all the inhabitants of the building and not permit anyone else to enter, even a relative of a tenant, until permission had first been obtained from the person to be visited. There was also a more unobtrusive guard of plainclothesmen of the NKVD (formerly the OGPU) who wandered about the building at all hours of the day and night. Their activities were not exclusively confined to watching the visitors of the tenants, servants or other members of the building's staff. Everyone came within their orbit of observation.

Many of our neighbors in the apartment building were men of international stature, well known outside the Soviet Union, at least by name. Among others there were Marshal Tukhachevsky, ambassador to the U. S.; Umansky; Lenin's sister, Ulianova, and his widow, Nadiejda Krupskaja. There were also Karl Radek, the leading theoretician of Communist doctrine; Nikita Khrushchev, then Secretary of the Moscow Communist Party; Bulganin, President of the Moscow Province Soviet; Rozengolts, the People's Commissar for Foreign Trade; Chernov, People's Commissar for Agriculture; Georgi Dimitrov, leader of the Comintern; Pakhomov, People's Commissar for the Merchant Fleet; Orlov, chief of the Red Navy, and Alxnis, chief of the Red Air Force.

Most of the menfolk used to leave the building to go to work any time between nine and eleven o'clock in the morning and those who had only one car used to send it back to be used by their wives. Several men did not come back for luncheon at all but those who did were usually back by

about two o'clock. All were back for dinner at around eight, after which most returned to their work (or pleasure) until about two or three in the morning.

The average family of man, wife and two children was served by a parlor maid, a pantry maid, a cook and, if the children were still small enough, a governess. There was no longer any opprobrium in this last. All the heavy cleaning was done weekly by servants of the building administration, strictly at the tenants' convenience. Neither the apartment in which we lived nor the servants who attended to us ever cost us a single kopec.

On September 1, 1935, I commenced my sixth year of schooling. I went to school number 19, a two-story building on Sofiskaia Embankment next door to the British Embassy and immediately across the Moskva river from the Kremlin Palace. The curriculum covered fourteen subjects, including "political training" and, later on, lessons on the Soviet Constitution. I was at that time a Pioneer, or member of the youth organization which takes children from eleven to fifteen years and prepares them for membership in the Komsomol. We studied no harder than I imagine most boys and girls of our age do anywhere in the world, and discipline was not strict enough to deter the mischievous ones amongst us, such as I was, from the whole range of schoolboy pranks. No beating was allowed and this was, in fact, punishable by imprisonment.

Like other Soviet schools, ours was co-educational and boys and girls attended the same classes. Every pupil considered himself immeasurably superior to his teachers by virtue of the fact that his father occupied a high rank in the service. The teacher, at the outset, was at a disadvantage in any attempt to impress discipline on the sons of ranking bureaucrats, and his only rather feeble weapon was the threat of a bad report card. A highly placed father in those days had, in all likelihood, little respect for book learning since he had done little of it himself and had succeeded just as well, or even better perhaps, without it. But any report to the effect that his son was obstructive sometimes had the desired effect, since no man wanted trouble with his superiors or colleagues because of any silly prank of his son's which might result in impeding the instruction of theirs.

There was a gang of us at school that hung very close

together. Among us were the sons of some of the most important leaders of the U.S.S.R., including Vassily Stalin.

I reveled in the society of those boys. Their manner was arrogant and swaggering and they showed their conviction of personal power as though they had been suckled to it. The sons of tyrants are princes without princeliness, and so were they all, to a greater or lesser degree. They were cruel and egocentric. But they were good company, for I was one of them.

And there was another thing. They gave me what I had been deprived of for too long—a sense of personal familiarity with the lives of the great leaders of my country. Through them I heard many things that, had I stayed in Berezniki reading newspapers to the end of my days, I would never have known. There is nothing in a Soviet newspaper that will give you an idea of a leader's personal or private life, although every leader is constantly described as kind, generous, wise, brave, honorable and so forth. From the newspapers one may glean only the idea that they do nothing but work during all their waking hours. Now, although this is not so very far from the truth as it may seem to be, for they do work hard, yet they all have their leisure and often some unconventional and not very commendable ways of spending it.

Genrikh Yagoda, for instance, the head of the NKVD, who lived with his wife in a beautiful mansion in Spiridonovka Street, used to organize orgies that sometimes lasted for days and which were attended by numerous men and women friends who all used to swim together naked in his private swimming pool. Then there was Voroshilov's son Piotr, who, in spite of his marriage to a wife of great personal beauty and charm, kept two apartments in Moscow and one in Leningrad permanently inhabited by mistresses who were changed from time to time. Kalinin, too, with his mistress Tatiana Bakh, a lady of the stage, would not have been eager to account for his leisure hours to the masses.

But the most famous, and the most talked about between ourselves, even by his own son Vassily with whom he did not appear to hit it off very well, was the great leader himself.

Very soon after the death of his second wife, Aliluiyeva, he took as his concubine the ballerina Semenova of the

Bolshoi Theater. She, as a result of this attachment, was instantly hailed as the prima ballerina of the Soviet Union, getting instant supremacy over Ulanova of the Leningrad Opera and Ballet Theater. This was not all. Concurrently with Semenova, Stalin also enlisted the affections and embraces of Maia Kaganovich, seventeen-year-old daughter of old Kaganovich, People's Commissar for Railroad Transportation, whose subsequent career was greatly furthered by his daughter's romantic attachment.

Stalin had two sons of his own and another adopted. The first was by his first wife Katerina and was called Jakov, or Jascha as we knew him. Stalin left his first wife and Jascha remained with her until she died. Then Stalin brought him to Moscow. But the boy was a disappointment to his father. He was a quiet, studious fellow with no thirst for the terrific personal risks and monumental intrigue that had raised his father to the supreme power in the Party and in the country. He was, therefore, soon sent to a special boarding school and was not allowed to use the name of Stalin, but was known by the leader's real name, Djughashvili. He seldom saw his father and, when I knew him, was studying machine technology at the Baumansky Institute.

Stalin's adopted son, Anatoli, was two and a half years my senior and known to us all as Tosha. He lived with his mother in one of the apartments of our building and went to school at Mopshik. His real father, now dead, was Sergeyevev, the Communist leader in the Don basin at the time of the Revolution, and known more popularly by the name of Artem. He was killed in the fighting against counter-revolutionary forces and Stalin, who had been his close friend, took care of his wife and adopted his son. Stalin seemed to have a great deal in common with his adopted son and used to have him spend every weekend at his country place outside Moscow, and frequently had him over to the Kremlin on weekdays for a chat. Tosha was fond of fine uniforms and was at once *dégagé* and grandly affected. Like his adopted father he was fanatically interested in the Communist Party, its aims, theory and methods. He was a good scholar and had an excellent memory, and he was a most popular raconteur.

Vassily, born of Stalin's second wife, Aliluyeva, who died, according to official reports at the time, of appendicitis in 1932, was a year older than I and was considered by his

father a stupid boy. He did not care a rap for studies, frequently stayed away from school and had already begun to drink like a fish.

We had a fine time. We danced, flirted with girls, went to the theater, had parties and enjoyed ourselves tremendously. Everything was easy for us and cost us nothing. The difficulties, the miseries and the burden of the common people were no concern of ours. We were the heirs of the universe, and drank in all the best that life had to offer our senses and in the way of ever new pleasures.

But behind it all we were aware of the ghost of Kirov.

Kirov was dead. The murderer, Nikolaiev, an unknown young Communist, lay in jail. Stalin, Voroshilov and Yagoda were in Leningrad to investigate personally. But then a new name made its appearance. It was that of Nikolai Yezhov (who knew then who he was?) who extorted the full confession of guilt from the murderer. He had served a Trotsky terrorist center of which Kamenev and Zinoviev had been the masterminds—though Zinoviev had been one of Trotsky's most implacable opponents in the old days.

There was a suspended silence in our thoughts, as in men trying to listen to the sound of faint drums beating beneath the surface of the earth, wondering at their meaning and wondering if others can hear them too.

Nineteen thirty-six and the first Moscow trials. Nothing to do with us, of course, but yet—and yet, what did it all mean? Respected, erstwhile powerful leaders were confessing a plot against the regime, a plan to liquidate Stalin. The NKVD had been alert, magnificent. The press and radio screamed for just vengeance, in an attempt to whip up to frenzy a human mass that remained stolidly lethargic and confused. Those who confessed were dogs and must be punished—but think how we trusted them for so many years. Very strange. What *did* it all mean?

Arrests were being made all over the city, quick, sudden, secret arrests that came with less warning than death, and left no trace but absence and despair. On Thursday a man had his hand shaken, he was smiled upon, congratulated; he had presented a plan, a good plan, and returned home with a sense of achievement and a day well spent. On Friday his name was mentioned only in whispers among men who hoped they knew each other well enough.

Volodia Kotov was my friend. He was my friend until his father was arrested. After that it was impossible; things could not be as they had been. A traitor's son—it was impossible, you understand. No one said, "poor Volodia." No one said, "It is not Volodia's fault." No one asked, "What is Volodia going to do? What will become of him?" No one mentioned Volodia. He did not exist any more. His apartment was already vacant.

The same year my father took us to Sochi for another holiday. He needed it. We used the time well. We went round the coast of the Black Sea to Khosta, Adler, Gagri, New Afon, Sukhum and Batum. I loved it, and I am glad for that because it was the last time I ever visited the summer resorts of the Caucasus.

The purge had developed apace during our absence. Many had vanished from our own building. The academicians, the theorists, the wise men of Communist philosophy had almost all gone, including Karl Radek, their leader. From the other government apartment building over in Granovsky Street, Piatakov, Ordjonikidze's assistant, was arrested. And then, shortly after we returned, Genrikh Yagoda himself, the chief of the NKVD, and grand inquisitor, fell. He was arrested by his successor, the man with the name that had only just become known to us, Nikolai Yezhov. Immediately after that the arrests became even more frequent.

The parades of November 7 came round again that year and Yezhov stood beside Stalin on Lenin's mausoleum. A small, still, tense man, fierce and sharp as a weasel. Many faces we had known well were now no longer there, but were replaced by others we did not know, those of men of the NKVD, daily becoming larger and more powerful.

The second Moscow Trials began in January 1937. Radek, Piatakov and many others confessed to the whole gamut of seditious crimes. The verdict for them was death or Siberia, which was a way of saying death delayed.

Then Ordjonikidze, my father's friend, died. His heart had failed, they said, and he was cremated. A little cask of his ashes was entombed in the Kremlin wall.

I believe my father loved that man. His admiration for him was deep and sincere. I think perhaps he had built

his hopes on him, leaned on him more than it is well for any man to lean on another. He thought of him as an elder, wiser brother; to a certain extent, if not entirely, Sergo Ordjonikidze had succeeded to the place in my father's affections previously occupied by my uncle Alexei, father's brother, already nearly twenty years in his grave. For a very short while, perhaps only a matter of hours, he was like a ship's captain whose compass has been washed overboard in a storm on the high seas.

I remember something very clearly the day he attended the funeral. He came home grave and subtly aged. Then, either at dinner or afterwards as we sat in the drawing room, in answer to a question from my mother he said:

"There is a mystery about the circumstances of his death, and I cannot explain it. I doubt if we shall ever know the truth about it."

It was not so much what he said that mattered. It was the measured tone that excluded surprise, the suggestion of deliberate euphemism. We knew what it meant.

SIX

THE STAR SETS

MY FATHER worked hard, and when I saw him at home he did not speak. Even mother was silent. She was worried and could not dissemble it. She was like an old and faithful hound that smells blood in its master's footsteps. It was the Fear, and she had never known it before. It communicated itself, wordlessly, to us.

"What becomes of political suspects after they are arrested, father?"

"They are tried and they are shot, my son."

"And if they are found innocent?"

"Then they are not traitors and they are set free. Are you trying to argue with me?"

"No, father. But is anyone ever found innocent?"

Tight lips became tighter.

"You are asking silly questions. I think it is time you went to bed."

"But really, father. I have not heard of any acquittals, have you?"

"It is time you went to bed, Anatoli."

There were no acquittals.

By the time the May Day parades came round there were more NKVD men in the government pavilion than ever before. Below Stalin on the mausoleum stood four of the five new marshals, Voroshilov, Tukhachevsky, Budenny and Yegorov. They were new only in the sense that they had lately been created marshals. Theirs was the first czarist rank reintroduced into the armed forces.

A mere few weeks after seeing Tukhachevsky on the saluting base at the parades I heard he had been arrested. With him went Kork, commander of the Moscow military district, and Yakir, commander of the Kiev military dis-

trict, as well as several others. They were all subsequently tried secretly and shot. They were all our neighbors.

All the time the arrests went on, and there was no means of telling who would be next. One day, as I stood outside our building, some NKVD men came to fetch Alxnis, chief of the Red Air Force. When they entered his apartment on the tenth floor he dropped out of the window and thudded to his death on the street, a matter of yards from where I stood. I think it was the same day that Kurski, Commissar of State Security and close assistant to Yezhov, shot himself in his office.

On November 5, 1937, my father returned from his office at about eleven o'clock at night, earlier than he usually did. He had with him our pass cards for attendance at the parades on the seventh as well as an invitation to the celebrations at the Bolshoi Theater commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Revolution. That was to be on the morrow, which would coincide with my father's birthday.

Tired after a hard day's work, he took a glass of vodka and together with mother, brother Valentin and myself, drank the traditional toast to his birthday which would begin in a few minutes' time. We saw his birthday in and all went to bed.

At four o'clock in the morning we were all awakened by a loud knocking on the door of our apartment. Dread clutched my heart. I knew it must be the NKVD as no one else could come up without our being advised. I ran to the door and opened it. On the threshold were three tchekists and a guard from the building, brought along as a witness. One of the tchekists had a pistol in his hand. Without a word they pushed me out of their way and strode into the apartment. As though they were familiar with its layout, they made straight for my mother's and father's bedroom.

I followed them in, my heart in my mouth, and watched the leading tchekist put his pistol to my father's head.

"Hands up!" he barked. "Citizen Granovsky, you are under arrest."

It was the first time in my life I had ever heard my father addressed as citizen instead of comrade.

"Where do you keep your firearms?"

My father told them, dully, and one of the men collected three pistols, one from his clothes and two from the library.

"Get up and put on an old suit," was the next order.

My father put on one of the outfits he had been used to wearing in Berezniki, a jacket of thick khaki gabardine, dark blue riding breeches and boots.

He tried to say something, but was silenced with a shout:

"Shut up!"

"Unlock all your closets and drawers," they ordered.

"There are no thieves here," my father said, "everything is already unlocked."

"Stay here with me," one of the men said, and he meant not only my father but my mother, us three sons and all the servants who had left their beds because of the noise.

While one of them kept a strict watch on us all, the other two began a thorough search of the room. When they had finished we were all moved into another room and the procedure was repeated, and so on from one room to the other. This search took some four hours. Everything we had was tampered with and roughly handled. Our piano, radio and gramophone were all taken to pieces; the paneling on the walls was tapped with a little hammer. On my father's desk they collected all papers, money, correspondence, photographs, watches, government bonds, lottery tickets, decorations, maps, a typewriter, binoculars, fountain pens, firearms and cameras. They packed these things in two of our suitcases to take them away. Everything of any value that they could not take with them they put in my father's library and locked the door, leaving a wax seal on the lock. Then they started to take my father away. We asked if at least we might be allowed to say goodbye to him, and one of the tchekists grudgingly and brusquely gave permission, saying:

"All right, kiss."

They led my father to the elevator, taking the suitcases with them. As soon as they were gone I raced out and slid down the banisters to the ground floor, arriving just in time to see my father being put into a waiting car. Just before he was pushed into the car my father turned to me and said:

"Tolya, believe me, I am an innocent man and hope to return soon. But while I am gone remember that you are the

eldest son and you must take care of your mother and brothers."

The door of the car was slammed shut, coming between me and my father like the lid of a coffin. The car engine roared into life and he was gone.

SEVEN

THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL

FIRST THE servants left us, silently and without warning. My mother went into the kitchen to have some tea made and there was no one there. I think this brought home to her the reality of our position more than anything else, for she came back weeping.

It was all up with us. We sat and waited for some indication as to what we should do.

We made our meals and waited until, in the evening, the tchekists came again. They ignored us completely, went into the library and searched it more thoroughly than before. They were looking for evidence. While they were still busy, the building administration sent up to say that we were to move out immediately and go down one floor to apartment 416 as a temporary measure. We were allowed three beds, four chairs, a table and a wardrobe. My brother Valentin and I hauled the furniture down as best we could. Outside, they were commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Revolution. Toasts were dedicated and drunk, bunting hung in the Red Square, the Bolshoi Theater glittered with a million lights, merriment and vainglory were the order of the day.

The new apartment was already full but for one room, and in this room we arranged ourselves and lived for a few months. Every other room was occupied by what remained of families of other enemies of the people, as we now also were—the family of an enemy of the people. They were people whose fathers had enjoyed what would have been considered only a few months ago powerful and unassailable positions in the government or armed forces. Now they were nothing.

We had brought with us whatever foodstuffs had remained in our old apartment after the quiet depredations of the servants prior to their flight, but this did not last

us more than a day or two and we had no money with which to buy more. No doubt we could have made the food eke out longer than that, but we were not yet accustomed to deprivation, had not yet learned to eat in order not to satisfy an appetite but to postpone the pain of hunger. I went out and sold a leather jacket of mine for 200 rubles, enough to buy black bread and beans to last us a month. And on this meager fare we had to live, just as did most of the other unfortunate inmates of the apartment.

We were ostracized by all who continued to live normally in the building—our former neighbors, who had known us, noticed us no longer. We were not allowed the use of the elevators but had to use the stairs. However, we had the room in which we lived and the shelter it afforded was quite favor enough for us.

My mother, who had always been beautiful and had always appeared young, now grew suddenly old and pathetic. She sat all day quite still on a hard chair with her hands in her lap and said nothing. There was something terrifying about her. In her silence and immobility, as though hypnotized, she yet gave the impression of something slowly happening, like the cocoon when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. Only, she had been the butterfly first.

She had no hope at all that we would ever see father again.

But I had. I not only believed that we should have him back but I also insisted in believing that his name would be cleared, that it had all been a terrible mistake. I could not bring myself to believe that my father was mixed up in any plot to depose Stalin or undermine the régime. It was utterly incredible. And I rejected the idea of any indefinite prolongation of the conditions in which we now found ourselves—the struggle for mere survival, the unprecedented importance of mere eating, the darkness of the morrow were all unbearable to me. This was not natural for us, we were unprepared for it and it could not, simply could not endure. There was only one solution. My father must be cleared, and then he would be free again and we could all be together leading normal lives as we had before.

I did not know how I could help my father, but it was clear to me that I must try all I could; not simply because he was my father and I missed him with something like a physical pain, but because by any concrete help to him I

would automatically be helping every member of my family. To begin with I felt that the authorities must not feel that his family had abandoned him. I hoped that, by a frank and fearless attitude on our part towards whatever accusations had been leveled against my father, we would favorably impress the authorities at the outset and stand a better chance of ultimate success than if we were simply to pretend to forget him.

I told this to my brother Valentin.

"Do you know what I think, Valentin? A plot was discovered against our leaders and it had already gone a long way. The government is taking no chances and the NKVD has been instructed to act without hindrance. There is a panic and too many people are being arrested. Soon the panic will stop and things will return to normal. That is why it is so important what we do, we who have remained free while father is in jail."

"What can we do, Tolya?" Valentin asked hopelessly.

"I don't know yet, but we must think, you and I. Listen. What do you think Igor Peters will gain by what he has done? You know he stood up at a meeting of the Komsomol and publicly renounced his father, said he was ashamed to be his father's son and spat on his name."

"I heard about it," said Valentin.

"Well, he was readmitted into the Komsomol but he will always be despised, after all, as a coward. He will never have a friend, never be trusted."

"So we do nothing," said Valentin. "We wait with patience."

"That's stupid too. That is what everybody else is doing."

"What then?"

"We must defend father. There has been a mistake. He has always been loyal just as we have been, and are still. We are not afraid of accusations because we know they must be false. This is the only way, a positive way. It will attract attention and perhaps succeed in convincing the NKVD and the Party. They may at least reinvestigate the evidence against him, if there is any. The only way for us to decide is, how do we go about it?"

But then mother spoke, almost for the first time in days. Apathetic as she was, I had scarcely realized she might be listening.

"Poor Tolya," she said, "you are a brave boy. So brave

and so big already, but so helpless." She smiled sadly. "You had better forget your plans, Tolya. Valentin is right. There is nothing you can do. Nothing. We must wait with patience and see what God provides."

"God, mother?" I whispered, astonished and incredulous. And then almost angrily, "What god?"

She laughed and her eyes flickered.

"Or Providence," she said.

I looked at Valentin who was wide-eyed and tried to convey to him the conviction I had that mother's mind was wandering, that she was overwrought from the strain of the last few days.

"Providence is the reward of our own labor, Mother," I said, thus discarding both God and Providence. "I shall find work to provide for us. But first I must find out about Father."

"You will be wasting your time, or you will make things worse for all of us. Leave these things alone."

"But Mother," I said earnestly, "I have just been explaining to Valentin that . . ."

"I know. I heard what you said. You talk well, Tolya, but you are still a baby. It is all hopeless."

I felt discouraged by the conviction with which she said these things, and was angry at myself for it. I stood up and spoke loudly, angrily and with reckless gestures.

"If you feel like that then we might as well all kill ourselves and be done with it."

She looked at me strangely but with complete composure. From the soft weariness of her eyes, the firm set of her mouth, I could see she had thought of that already.

"Mother!" I began, but I could not go on. I turned to Valentin. "Look after her and see that she comes to herself. I'm going out."

I left the room. In the street below the cold air seemed to give me courage.

EIGHT

THE CRIMES OF THE PARENTS

THERE WERE so many prisoners in the jails of Moscow at that time that a special system had had to be devised to cover the enormous numbers of people making enquiries and, in accordance with the first letter of a prisoner's surname, only two days per month were allotted when enquiries could be made concerning him. Thus the visitor had to wait for his day and even then, when he visited one of the three jails, he would only be told if the prisoner was there at that time or not. I drew a blank twice, but eventually I succeeded in finding where my father was.

It is interesting to recall one of the visits made to the Central Information Bureau of the NKVD. One had to get there early, otherwise, in the press of visitors, there was little chance of being attended to. I was there at two in the morning and there were already somewhere near a hundred people waiting. We all stood there in the black courtyard, huddled together in groups, our breath breaking from us like blasts of steam in the freezing air until at last, seven hours later, the office opened. At dawn some windows in the wing of the building overlooking the courtyard were thrown open, and the wives and children of lesser NKVD functionaries who lived there started to shout out the usual epithets at us down below. Enemies of the people. Capitalist traitors. Exploiters of the workers. Some of them emptied cans of garbage over our heads and laughed uproariously at the sight of the unlucky ones jumping in vain to dodge the filth and getting smothered with it. We below did not express any reaction. It was better not.

On one such occasion I was finally attended to at about midday. In front of me I heard someone behind a cashier's window call out "Next!" I stepped forward to confront the face of a man with cold grey eyes behind prim pince-nez glasses.

"Prisoner's name?" he called.

"Mickail Alexandrovich Granovsky," I answered.

"Date of arrest?"

"November 6, 1937."

The man started to thumb a huge, loosely bound index. Eventually he said:

"The prisoner has been in the Central NKVD Prison, but has since been transferred. Next!"

"Please, just a moment. Where has he been . . . ?"

"Next!"

The guards were watching me closely. I was pushed on.

Finally I found he was at Butirki Prison. It was, of course, quite out of the question that I should be permitted to see my father personally. I had not expected that. But at least I knew where he was, and was permitted to leave fifty rubles to supply him with cigarettes, soap, etc. But I could not find out anything about his condition, his health, what he had been accused of, or when he would be tried.

From that time on, whenever I could, on the second and seventeenth days of each month, which were his name days, I went to fetch whatever slim news I could of my father. I only "found" him three times in all, and the last time was in December, 1938.

Meanwhile I had to find work. That, at least, was my right. Every free Soviet citizen has the right to employment guaranteed by the constitution.

I trudged around the city and went to a hundred places, but everywhere with the same lack of success. It was not that there was no work, or that I was no good. It was that my father was an enemy of the people. There was always the same questionnaire, the same interview, and it had to come out that my father had been arrested. There was no work for the son of an enemy of the people.

I became desperate for want of money and, seeing no way out, I wrote letters to Stalin, Voroshilov, Kalinin and Molotov explaining our situation and imploring that I be given some sort, any sort, of a job. I appealed on the grounds of Stalin's own declaration made at the seventeenth congress of the All Soviet Union Communist Party that children in the Soviets would never suffer for the crimes of their parents. It was useless. I never got a reply.

For three months we lived on whatever scraps of food

I was able to collect from going the rounds of restaurant kitchens late at night. There, in those places, I found a rough, self-conscious pity, even though I was treated like the scavenger I had become. Finally I wrote to an old friend of my father's called Bruskin, who was now commissar of a newly formed commissariat for the production of machine tools. I wrote without hope but because I wanted to live and every try was worth the trouble it gave. After all, perhaps personal contacts might do more than all Stalin's public proclamations and promises?

Bruskin did not reply. But I received an order to present myself at his temporary office in the Sovnarkom building. There his secretary met me and told me to go to the Sergo Ordjonikidze tool factory as there would be an opening for me as a turner's assistant.

The director of the factory was a man called Alexander Efremov, the same who after the war became vice-premier to Stalin. I was received very coldly by him as soon as my father's name was mentioned, but he had had his instructions and carried them out so that I was put to work right away under a friendly foreman called Lapin. We were paid on piecework and the foreman was very helpful in his patient efforts to make a good turner of me. Even so, I never made more than 300 rubles per month. This was just enough for us to live on, provided we kept to an unvaried diet of bread, beans and lentils. Lapin told me he averaged a steady 600 rubles.

I had begun to work at the factory on March 13, 1938. On May 1 of the same year my protector Bruskin was arrested. Very shortly afterwards I began to be called away from my work for long periods to be questioned by the NKVD men attached to the factory. They wanted to know how it came about that I knew Bruskin, and why he had taken the trouble to find me a job. They had a pattern of questioning and kept on repeating certain questions at unexpected moments and in different ways, trying to confuse me and get me to contradict myself. All this wasted time caused me to lose money and this, added to the psychological effect of the many questionings, began to wear me down.

In June the interrogations ended, but I was fired. I did not even try to find another full-time job, but went the rounds of our neighborhood offering my services for small

repair jobs. I went round from house to house and succeeded in earning a few rubles a day.

Mostly there were no repairs to be done, not because none were needed but because money was scarce and, after all, people did not own their houses. If a cooker or hot plate went wrong, though, I found a job. Sometimes I found more than a job. Like the time I repaired a stove.

"There, comrade housewife. Your stove is ready. The connection was faulty, you see."

"Let me try it, then, and make some tea. You will have tea, won't you?"

"Yes, please."

"And how much do I have to pay you?"

I shrugged.

"Five rubles is a fair price."

"Five rubles? And what are you going to do with so much money?"

"So much money?" I exclaimed, astonished.

"I believe you will spend it on a pretty girl. Am I right?"

She came nearer and smiled. Her teeth were regular and she was not ugly. She was breathing rather fast.

"Little sister, I cannot spend money on pleasure. I must wait for that until it is given to me."

I took her hands. Her hair was fair and she was about twenty-five.

"Come," she whispered, although there was no need to whisper, and led me into an adjoining room, a bedroom. "Let us lie down here while the kettle boils."

I wondered if I should collect my five rubles or not. Sometimes I did and sometimes it seemed to be expected of me that I should not.

Long before this time we would have been evicted from the apartment house had it not been for the fact that Cholukhov, another old friend of my father's who had just been elected to a five-year term on the Supreme Soviet, was good enough to give instructions delaying our eviction until another place had been found for us. What usually happened to people who had no further right to continue where they were and no other place to go to was that they were taken by truck to a spot on the highroad 100 kilometers out of Moscow and turned loose. Many did not survive this treatment. In this respect we were lucky, for another place

was found for us, although, obviously, this had not been easy. The population of Moscow had, during the past few year, far outgrown its housing capacity. The building program, too, was behind schedule, with the result that every shack was inhabited and where one family had lived before three and four had to live.

We moved in October, 1938, to number 5 Vladimirov Street, a little alley just off Kuibishev Street, where we were given a room some twelve feet by thirteen. It was a ramshackle old house, the outside walls as thick as a fortress and the inside ones of clapboard plastered over. Under the house was a large pool of stagnant water which gave off a very pungent smell, quite impossible to ignore. Outside our room, in a long corridor, burned a solitary bulb of incredibly low wattage. It gave so little light that the doors of the rooms giving on to the corridor could scarcely be distinguished from the dingy walls.

Outside, in the courtyard of the old building, refuse was piled high and was never removed. The rain seeping through it caused it to rot slowly from underneath.

There was only one lavatory, one very poorly equipped kitchen and no bathroom for a total of thirty-five people living in the nine rooms that gave on to the corridor. For all of us there was only one tap from which to draw water. And the rent was sixty-two rubles per month.

In the same house with us lived two minor NKVD officials with their families and a truck driver whose wife worked in a bakery. These people were much better off for food than the rest of us, and the smell of the dishes they cooked—meat with sauce and onions and vegetables—was enough at times to drive us crazy with disgust at our horrible beans, lentils and potatoes.

In December of that year came the news that Nikolai Yezhov had been deposed as People's Commissar of the NKVD and was now People's Commissar of the Merchant Navy. Shortly afterwards he vanished completely. No one ever heard how or why this man, who had directed the liquidation of some three million people in three years, was finally liquidated himself. His place was taken by the Georgian Lavrenti Beria, and everyone hoped that the mass arrests would come to an end. They did not. Yezhov had arrested all old party leaders and established a new *corps*

d'élite; now Beria proceeded to scatter the chosen of Yezhov, and any who had held high posts under or through Yezhov were weeded out and destroyed.

It was at the beginning of the same month that I went out for the last time to locate my father's whereabouts, as in the course of months I had still not succeeded in locating him. I went to the State Prosecution Office and, after the usual identification preamble, this is what I was told:

"The convicted enemy of the people Mickail Alexandrovich Granovsky has been sentenced by the Special Council for his crimes of espionage, sabotage and counter-revolutionary activities to ten years' imprisonment in a Special Purpose camp where he will work, deprived of all human rights."

So it was over. I walked away slowly. If they had told me the truth and my father had not been killed already, then he would surely not survive this last ordeal. Where and when had he stood trial? What had he done that was now called espionage, sabotage and counter-revolutionary activities? I was never to know. I never knew in what state of health he was, never received a message from him, was never able to leave a message for him.

But within a few days a ray of hope flickered.

The clerk said that father had been sentenced by the Special Council. This was a triumvirate consisting then of Vishinsky, Ulrich and Yezhov, the last being by far the most powerful member. But since then Yezhov had been deposed. It was obvious that Yezhov, the unscrupulous climber who had attained power so suddenly and so absolutely, would force any conviction and any sentence that justified his previous acts. He had ordered father's arrest as he had that of so many other highly placed government members, and he had clearly felt bound to act consistently to the end. But Yezhov had been replaced. Who knows, I thought, that with Beria there may well be a chance still. The thought excited me beyond all bounds.

But hoping without action would be of no use. I must somehow get to see Lavrenti Beria and talk to him. That was obvious. But how? How? I could think of nothing. Finally I took the most obvious course, the one as obviously doomed to failure, but I took it because I had to do something and could not go on waiting forever.

I first wrote a letter to my mother, telling her that if I

did not appear at home for a little while she must not worry. I was looking for Father, I said. And if the NKVD came to search the room she must not worry either as it would only be a routine measure. This letter I put in a coat pocket and left it at home. Then I wrote another letter telling her to look in my coat pocket. This letter I planned to give to a friend of mine, a boy whose father had also been liquidated. His name was Erik Korkmasov.

I gave him the letter and asked him to post it if he did not receive a visit from me in his room within twelve hours.

I left him at about eleven o'clock and went straight to the NKVD building. This occupies an entire city block and is an immense fortress-like construction of buildings within buildings. I entered it by the side door on Malaia Lubianka Street. No sooner had I gone in than I was stopped by two NKVD soldiers with pistols strapped to their hips. A third stood watching in the background. One of the first looked me quickly up and down and asked me harshly what I wanted. I said I wanted to speak to the chief of the GUGB (Main Section of State Security). He smiled superciliously.

"You can have no business with him," he said. "Leave the building at once."

One after the other, I tried the other three entrances to the building, but always with the same result. It was no use. Discouraged, I returned to Erik Korkmasov's so that he should not post the letter I had given him. Back at home that night I lay in bed racking my brains for a solution to the problem of how to get past the guards. At last, well past midnight, I thought of a plan.

NINE

ARREST

WHEN I awoke the following morning, January 27, my younger brother Volodia was the only one in the room. I gave him some honeycake of which he was very fond and then I kissed him goodbye. About midday I walked out on to the Red Square.

Soon I was at Lenin's mausoleum and had begun to walk slowly up and down alongside it when a man in plain clothes, recognizably of the NKVD, came up to me.

"Are you waiting for someone?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered; "I am waiting for you to arrest me as I want to be taken to the chief of the GUGB."

This was no doubt the last answer the man had expected to get. He stared hard at me. Recovering himself, he ordered me to accompany him.

We went to a Special Operations Room situated at the base of the famous Spaskaia Tower in the Kremlin. There some uniformed members of the NKVD were ordered by the plainclothesman to search me. However, they found nothing of consequence except my passport—not, as in the West, a document permitting one to leave the country, but an identity document, a permit to exist. From there I was taken, under armed escort and with my hands behind my back, across the Red Square to the GUM building (the State Universal Store) which, on the ground floor, housed another Special Operations Room used by senior personnel of the Red Square *tchekists*.

I was not allowed to sit down or talk. After a few minutes a car arrived and I was told to sit in the back seat between two *tchekists*. We drove off quickly and were soon passing what is now October Twenty-fifth Street, across Dzerjinsky Place and outside the NKVD building I had so fruitlessly approached on the previous day. However, we did not stop at any of the four entrances I had tried but at a small, hid-

den door on Malaia Lubianka Street. One of the men pressed a button in the wall and the door was opened from the inside by two armed NKVD soldiers. It was closed again as soon as we were inside.

Before me stretched a long, brilliantly lit corridor of which the walls, floor and ceiling were all white. At intervals of a few yards along the length of the corridor were white-painted doors. One of these doors was opened and I was pushed into the room beyond. It was like a very small swimming bath, for it was completely bare and empty and was tiled white, like the corridor outside.

I was told to undress. As I took them off, my clothes were taken up and examined, the linings of my trousers and jacket being slit with a razor blade. All the metal buttons of the clothes were removed and my belt, necktie and scarf were taken away. Then my whole body came under a methodical probing search.

When they had finished, I was given a piece of coarse soap and told to take a hot shower. I was given no towel, however, so I could not dry myself afterwards but had to put my clothes, wrecked as they were, on my wet body. I was then taken across a courtyard to another part of the building and, as the temperature outside was well below zero, I felt the cold terribly in my damp clothes.

After having my fingerprints and my photograph taken, front face and profile from both sides, I was put into a dark gray cell where I found two other people. The door of the cell had a very large lock, so made that a key could only be inserted from the outside, and above it was a spy-hole, covered on the outside by a metal disc: every thirty seconds or so we could hear this disc slide to one side and an eye would peer through the hole. There were three iron bedsteads, all with mattresses, but apart from these there was no furniture in the cell. The heavily barred window was paned with thick frosted glass, beyond which was the inverted metal hood which, I later learned, was put there to prevent prisoners from being able to see out, even if the glass was broken, or from throwing anything out. My cell mates were quite obviously men who had lately occupied responsible positions.

For supper that night we were each given a dirty metal plate of lentil soup to be eaten with an equally dirty spoon. After the meal we returned the plates and spoons and made

a communal visit to the toilet. The three of us had to make our toilet in front of a guard who kept shouting impatiently, "Quick, quick! Hurry up!" It was most disturbing.

By the time we got to bed I was very tired and could have slept very soundly. But first one and then the other of my companions was taken out of the cell and others were brought in in their place. After a while they, too, were taken away and others brought in. I think no less than eight people passed through that cell during the night. At intervals there were noises like cannon as great iron doors were slammed shut along the echoing corridor outside. Some of the prisoners wept and groaned as they lay in bed. Sleep was impossible.

At six o'clock in the morning, or thereabouts, a soldier brought in a broom and ordered us to sweep up the cell. Then a hasty toilet and our breakfast—a moist piece of black bread and a mug of hot, colorless tea. Throughout the rest of the day I did not remain with the same pair of cell mates for more than one hour, as they were constantly being switched. As I had already looked with distaste on the tripe soup for lunch and the mess served up for dinner, by the time night came I was fairly hungry. But at least I hoped to have a good night's rest.

Unexpectedly enough, the switching of prisoners ceased and I was able to sleep moderately well—until three o'clock in the morning. Then a jailer looked into the cell and told me to prepare for interrogation.

I dressed to a string of imprecations from the jailer who, when I was ready, let me out into the corridor. Two soldiers were waiting there who proceeded to rattle off a series of instructions to me before marching me off.

"Look to the front. Keep your hands behind your back. Do not move your head to either side. Do not move without being told to." It was a relief to arrive at the interrogation room, especially as it had been made clear to me that if I failed to follow the instructions rigidly the soldiers had the right to shoot me out of hand.

On the way up in the lift and along the passages which led to the interrogation room I had to stand several times with my face pressed against a wall of the corridor while someone, whom I was being prevented from seeing, was removed from an interrogation room or taken across the corridor. Sometimes I was placed in a booth like a telephone

kiosk. Thus, every time we were about to pass a door, the foremost of the soldiers would smite his belt buckle with a key as warning that a prisoner was en route and no doors must be opened. If an answering clap came I was pushed to the wall.

At length we entered an office in which were two State Security lieutenants. They dismissed my guards as soon as one of them had given my jailer a stamped receipt for my safe delivery. Then I was taken into another room accompanied by one of the lieutenants.

This new room was massively and austere furnished in a way that might well awe a man before his interrogation began. There were the great desk and dark, heavy chairs, the silence, the neatness of everything and, last of all, the State Security captain, the interrogator, who sat straight-backed, cold-eyed and utterly impersonal.

Without taking his eyes off me, the captain pointed to a document lying on his desk. I was to read it. It related to the cause of my arrest. According to it, I had been loitering with intent to spy and I was accused of planning an act of violence against the State. As soon as I had finished reading this, the interrogation commenced.

"Granovsky," said the captain evenly, "why did you wish to be brought before the chief of the GUGB?"

"To find out about my father," I told him.

"And what were you doing on the Red Square?"

"I went there to be arrested by one of the NKVD plainclothesmen stationed there."

"How did you know that there are secret agents of the NKVD on the Red Square, and who told you about such agents?" he asked.

I explained that I had been accustomed to associating with high government officials who frequently had NKVD protection, and I knew about the NKVD agents as a matter of course. I could even recognize them, I told him, and showed him how their walk betrayed them.

"You are an excellent mimic, but," and his voice rose to a shout, "you are accused of spying on members of the government and on agents of the Security Section."

I said nothing, and the captain produced the letter I had left in my jacket pocket at home.

"Why did you write this?" he asked.

"To prevent my mother from worrying," I told him.

"Who posted the second letter you wrote?"

"Erik Korkmasov."

"Don't you trust the NKVD?" he asked ominously.

"Don't you believe that your father is a criminal?"

"I trust the NKVD," I said, "but I think there has been a terrible mistake regarding my father. There is new leadership now; perhaps his case could be reviewed."

The captain said nothing more to me but ordered the lieutenant to take me out of the room. I waited in another room for some fifteen minutes, the lieutenant watching me all the time, and then a major, one of the highest ranks conferred at the time in the NKVD, strode in. This man ordered me to go back into the captain's room with him. There, after a few more questions had been put to me by the captain and the major, I was given a blank sheet of paper and told to put my signature at the bottom of it.

Surprised, I asked the reason for this, but my question was met with a fit of rage from the captain who screamed that it was not for me to question orders but to obey. I signed my name as directed.

The major then left the office and, after an uncomfortable ten minutes during which I stood before the captain's desk, he returned with People's Commissar of the NKVD, Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria. I was ordered to stand to attention as Beria and two other high ranking officials of the NKVD walked into the room.

The captain sprang to his feet.

"Comrade People's Commissar," he said, "I have been questioning this seventeen-year-old son of an enemy of the people, Anatoli Mickailovich Granovsky, who was arrested in the Red Square for spying and planning to perform acts of terrorism against members of the Politburo."

Without a word, Beria looked me up and down as though I were some new and rather repulsive species or reptile. I tried to explain to Beria that what he had just heard was a fantastic lie, but as soon as I opened my mouth the captain ordered me to shut up and told the lieutenant to take me out of the room. I was then taken back to my cell.

Back in my cell I began to think what would come of all this. Surely, I thought, they could not possibly believe in the charges they were bringing against me. Having found my letters they must know that I was innocent, as a guilty man would scarcely go out and invite arrest. I had not expected

things to take this strange turn and was worried. I was afraid, too, that the NKVD searchers who found the letters had also perhaps forced my mother to put her name to some "declaration" or other.

I did not speak of anything to my cell mates as they were always being moved and, besides, I had no idea who they might be.

Later that morning I was taken under guard to an interior courtyard where there was a van. It was of a type well enough known in Moscow; a closed van with the word "Bread" painted on all sides of the body, used for making deliveries from the general bakeries to distributors.

The large steel door at the back was opened and I was ordered up the three steps and inside. Immediately I was struck with the astonishing interior. It consisted of a corridor, roughly two feet wide, running the whole length of the body, and on each side were four narrow doors. Only one of these was open, and through it I was pushed. I found myself in a steel box set up on end, as it were, with no window and no light. As soon as I was inside, the door was closed and I was left in complete darkness. With my hands I felt around and encountered a tiny steel shelf protruding from one of the walls. I sat down on it. After a few minutes I heard noises that betrayed the fact that another prisoner was being put into another tiny cell, and I wondered at the completeness of the precautions taken to avoid having any prisoner see another. My own father might be sitting next to me and I would never know.

The van drove off and, after a ride of some fifteen minutes, stopped briefly while I heard the sound of gates being opened. Then we moved on again a little before coming to a stop. I heard the sound of the cells being emptied, one after the other, never two at a time. My turn came and, as soon as I emerged, I was blinded by a powerful electric light.

As soon as my eyes became more or less accustomed to the brightness, I saw we were in a huge hall with a tiled floor and high ceiling. It must have been 100 by 130 feet large and gave the impression of a railway station unaccountably deprived of tracks and platforms. I was immediately hurried away by two soldiers toward one of a whole line of rust-colored doors. The door was opened and I was thrust inside.

It was a small room with a disproportionately high ceil-

ing in which was a brightly burning electric light. All four walls and the floor were made of white tiles and the ceiling was whitewashed. There were no windows. The door was hermetically closed and no sound from the outside could be heard. There was nowhere to sit except the floor, so there I sat and remained for two, or maybe three, hours. Then three guards came in and carried out a search of my clothing, precisely as I had already been through. Again I was told to have a hot shower after this search, and again I was given no towel with which to dry myself. When I returned to the cell, I found my lunch ready for me—a plateful of skins of beans, tripe and watery liquid. Both this and the spoon which I must use were lying on the floor. I could not yet bring myself to eat such dirty-looking food.

Later on I was taken out of the cell again and taken down the corridors and across courtyards. I noticed that it was late twilight so that I must have been in the bare little cell for some ten hours. I was now put into cell number 245.

TEN

BUTIRKI PRISON

IT WAS a large cell, occupied already by about forty men. But these men were in such a miserable and weakened condition that, in spite of myself, I felt suddenly cold with fear.

The first thing I did when the guards had gone was to ask generally where I was, for I still had not the faintest idea. It was Butirki Prison, they told me. When I told them my name, several of them said that they had known my father. They were all eager for some sort of news, and plied me with questions which I answered as best I could. When I described the place I had just come from, they told me it was the central distribution center, known as the "kennels." Soon a plate, mug and a spoon were passed into the cell and the jailer said they were mine.

The walls of the cell were lined with simple plank beds, of which the boards were set wide apart in order, the men said, to make sleep as difficult and uncomfortable as possible. At the head of each bed was a thin, rolled-up palliasse which the men were allowed to use only between the hours of ten at night and five in the morning. There was a vile smell in the cell, and I asked whether there was an open drain somewhere near. Worse, the men said, pointing to a large steel box at one end of the room, it was the cell latrine. There were only two latrine parades per day, they said, and between those the steel box had to be used. I was soon told that, according to the rule of the cell, I, as the newcomer, would have to sleep in the place nearest to the latrine.

At the extreme end of the room were two frosted glass windows, barred and protected by the ubiquitous inverted steel hood. On the side opposite to the latrine was a radiator, hopelessly inadequate for the heating of the room. At the far end of the gangway formed by the lines of beds was a long, tall, narrow table, under the top of which were nailed twelve boxes on each side, designed as lockers for the prisoners' plates, spoons and mugs.

Some of us talked disconsolately for a while, though most of the men did nothing, until the cell door was opened and a bucket of food was thrust inside. Someone took the bucket and, with microscopical exactitude, began distributing the food on to all the plates. It was pearl-barley porridge, and it had the same grayish color as the bucket that contained it. I was struck with pity at the sight of these men waiting with bated breath and eyes like hungry wolves as the food was distributed. No one was allowed to touch his plate until all had been served and until it could be seen that all shares were equal. Then the men fairly leapt at their plates and ate voraciously.

One or two, however, stood staring at their plates and glancing about them. They were waiting to be fed by someone who had finished, as they were unable to feed themselves. Several people were more or less afflicted in this manner, some with a broken right hand, others with both arms broken, all injuries incurred at Butirki Prison at the hands of interrogators. Having such a man beside me I took up his spoon and offered to feed him. Why, he asked, did I not finish my own first? I was in no hurry, I told him. When his plate was empty he was still so obviously hungry that I gave him half of mine as well. I had still not become really hungry myself.

Most of the men were dressed in ragged clothes of the type worn by Russian workers in winter, consisting of cotton wadding sewn, like a quilt, into a cheap outer cloth, spread out thinly and cross-stitched to prevent spreading and lumping. These were worn right next to the skin, and on the feet were worn the simple Russian peasant *lapti*, straw slippers, with no socks on underneath. In these clothes, worn as they were, it was impossible not to feel perishingly cold during the winter months.

There was a lavatory parade just after dinner. As the jailer shouted for them to form up, the prisoners scurried to fall into double file along the gangway between the beds, the first two men picking the latrine box up between them and the rest lining up behind them. I counted altogether thirty-seven men. And yet, to judge by the number of lockers under the table, the cell was meant for twenty-four.

We heard the sound of the jailer's key being smacked against the buckle of his belt and then of a key in the lock of the door. Immediately all the men put their hands be-

hind their backs, the front two placing their one free hand in this manner. We were then marched out, one jailer at the head of the column and another at the tail, his rifle at the ready.

When we arrived at the latrines the two men with the steel box began frenziedly cleaning it out with sand from a box in the corner. All the others set about attending to themselves after a scramble for the eight taps and eighty latrine cubicles, while those left out shouted for the others to hurry up. As with eating, some of the men had to be helped with this function too.

We were allowed ten minutes to complete our toilet. At the end of that time we marched back to our cell which, after the strong light of the latrines, seemed like a dark-room with its two paltry bulbs, its dark green walls and dirty gray ceiling.

Once back in the cell I was told we would have to wait for the evening inspection before we could go to bed. This was an inspection nominally carried out by the prison governor, but in fact by one of his delegates.

Everyone stood up at the foot of his bed, leaving the gangway free. One prisoner, the "trusty," stood in readiness by the door. We began to hear doors being slammed shut and orders being shouted out at intervals of about half a minute. Then it was our turn and the "trusty" shouted, "Attention!"

The door opened and a State Security sergeant walked in, straight and haughty as a peacock, his uniform brand new and beautifully pressed, his boots polished like brass mirrors. The "trusty" then gave his report.

"Citizen Assistant of the Prison Governor. Thirty-seven prisoners all present. No sickness."

The sergeant marched quickly up the gangway, looked at the windows, marched back and left the cell, the door being slammed shut after him.

I sat on my bed for about half an hour before the little jailer's window was opened and we were given the order to turn in. We unrolled our mattresses, and lay down, feet to the wall and head to the gangway so that the jailer could see us better through the peephole. The lights remained on right through the night, also so that we should easily be seen. The mattress was very thin and narrow, not more than four feet long, reaching only from the head to the knees. There

were no pillows. No blankets. It became very cold indeed. Even I, in my thick ski-suit, felt cold, so I can imagine how those must have felt who had been arrested in summer time and were still wearing the remains of their light summer clothes.

I went to sleep at last, but did not sleep without interruption through the night. Twice we were awakened as guards came in to take a prisoner away for interrogation. One of these was thrown back into the cell in a pitifully beaten and bloody condition. He crawled into the bed next to mine and, as soon as the door was closed, the other prisoners came across and washed his cuts and bruises as best they could with a little drinking water. They went back to bed and the man lay inert, occasionally coughing and spitting blood onto the cell floor.

Gorodietsky, for that was the man's name, was between thirty-eight and forty years old and had been a member of the Communist Party since 1924, but after Lenin had died and Stalin had managed to discredit Trotsky. In other words, Gorodietsky joined the Party when such a thing as legal opposition was definitely a thing of the past.

He had risen well and, before his arrest, had been chief of the Ship-building Section of the People's Commissariat of the Ocean Fleet.

He had been taken without warning, in July, 1936, straight from his office and had been denied permission to see his wife or to change his white summer clothing. During the two and a half years he had spent in Moscow jails his clothes had been reduced to shreds and he had eventually been given a set of "State clothes"—canvas trousers, padded cotton wadding jacket and straw slippers.

He was very thin and bowed, looking much older than he was. His skin was deathly sallow except for two spots of high color on his cheeks. He coughed continuously and frequently brought up blood.

When he was interrogated for the first time, the State Security sergeant conducting the proceedings requested him to write down a full account of his life to the day of his arrest. This he was required to sign. A few days later he was called back and shown a typewritten copy of the autobiography he had written and was told to sign this too. But he read it first. He saw that, in addition to what he had

written, several things had been added: a "confession" that he had joined the Trotsky Opposition Organization in 1933 and that he worked actively for German Intelligence. He had, so his autobiography now read, carried out German orders and sabotaged the building of several ships so that when they were launched several defects showed up which made them unfit to put to sea.

Gorodietsky looked at the smiling interrogator and refused to sign the paper. Three *tshekists* were summoned and proceeded to beat Gorodietsky with their rifle butts and a rubber hose. His hands were clamped down to a board and gramophone needles were hammered into the flesh of his fingers under the nails. Then someone kicked him in the groin and he lost his senses.

He was sent to the Butirki prison hospital. The doctor in charge of him had orders to get him into shape for further interrogation. The doctor's first objective, therefore, was this, even at the cost of proper medical care. He therefore castrated Gorodietsky, gave him a few strengthening injections, patched him up and sent him back in less than two weeks.

He was again told to sign the false declaration, but with fanatical determination he refused. He was beaten again, and was told that, if he continued to be difficult, his wife, who was then pregnant, would be imprisoned immediately.

Gorodietsky had been beaten and ruined, but he had not lost his quite extraordinary courage and self-respect.

Soon, Gorodietsky's wife was arrested and required to sign a document in which her husband was accused of espionage and sabotage of the régime. Distracted, the woman refused, saying she knew nothing of all this. She was then brought face to face with her husband, and the two were told for the last time to sign their respective statements. They both stolidly refused.

Four men now came into the room, two of whom held Gorodietsky fast so that he could not move, while the other two laid hold of his wife and threw her onto the floor. As Gorodietsky screamed his vain protests they kicked and beat her tirelessly. At last she set up a terrible screaming and the men held back, for something was happening. Her baby was delivered, stillborn, on the cold floor of the interrogation room, while Gorodietsky's helpless rage and hate

and pity welled up and nearly choked him. His wife was removed insensate to a hospital.

Gorodietsky told me it had become an article of faith with him, as it were his last thread of connection with civilized living, not to sign their lying documents. He did not see his wife for a year, and by then she was barely recognizable. Both of them suffered unspeakable brutalities at the hands of the guards, but their determination never broke.

When I met him, he had already been committed to the hospital sixteen times, and was convinced that he had only a few months to live. He was a typical central Russian, fair-haired, with a round, intelligent face and his quiet and subdued conversation marked him immediately as an educated man. He was sorry, he said, that he slept so near me and advised me to sleep with my head turned away from him so that I would not inhale the air that had passed through his sick lungs.

ELEVEN

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY

EVERYONE IN our cell, except for Gorodietsky and myself, had already signed a "full confession," either before or after the arrest of their wives.

About the beginning of April a new prisoner joined us. But, although he was new in our cell, he had already been in prison since early 1937. He was an Azerbaïjanian and his name was Midjanov. I asked him if he had ever come in contact with my father since he had been in jail. He told me quietly that he had seen my father last December in cell number 172 of the same Butirki Prison. He even described the clothes that my father was wearing, which were the same as on the day of his arrest, so I know there could be no mistake.

When I heard this, something inside me gave way and, running to the door of the cell I beat on it with both fists. The other prisoners tried to stop me, shouting to me not to be a fool.

The jailer came and took me out into the corridor. He asked me no questions but, with his comrade, dealt me a few swift and painful blows with his pistol and threw me back into the cell. But I was determined that I must somehow, now, get permission to see my father who might still be in the same jail. I beat on the door again.

This time the jailers took me to the lavatories where I was beaten until I fainted. A bucket of water was thrown over me, bringing me round but drenching all my clothes and leaving me shivering. When I stood up I was taken to see one of the assistants of the prison governor. This man asked me what the trouble was about and I said that I urgently requested permission to see my father. I did not mention Midjanov, for I felt that some trouble might develop on him, but I pleaded as persuasively as I could.

I was told curtly that if I once more created a disturbance

as I had just done I would be put into solitary confinement. I had already heard what that meant. The solitary confinement cells were like cold vertical coffins of stone where there was neither room for a man to sit, lie, nor stand straight up. I was returned to my cell.

When I returned, Midjanov told me that my father had been forced to sign a "confession" admitting to being a German spy and to having carried out various orders to sabotage parts of the great Voroshilov chemical combines and the railroad construction undertaking of which he had been chief before his arrest. When I asked pointedly how my father was, Midjanov said wryly that he was all right. I knew this could not be so.

Midjanov obviously felt he had made a mistake in telling me anything of his having seen my father, and avoided the subject afterwards.

Some few days after this we received a newcomer into our cell. He was so nervous and hesitant on entering that the guards had to push him across the threshold, and even when the door had closed behind him he stood shrinkingly and looked about him with a strange, fearful wariness. But he was clean and was dressed in a military uniform of fine cloth and impeccable cut, with cavalry-type breeches and highly polished, though smudged, top boots. Those of us who could still entertain some normal human curiosity about such matters noticed at once that he had been a high-ranking NKVD officer. His uniform was stripped of all rank and other insignia, but the marks remained where those had been and were almost as clear as the insignia themselves. Furthermore, the raspberry-colored border round the hem of his collar and the top of his cuffs, as well as the stripe of the same color down the sides of his breeches, betrayed him at once as belonging to the NKVD, as did the silhouette of the spirally writhing snake spitted on a downward-thrusting dagger, the NKVD badge. The quality of his uniform and top boots showed that he must have held a high rank.

We looked at him silently for a few minutes, weighing him up and absorbing our astonishment at seeing someone from the NKVD in such a condition. Suddenly someone laughed a derisive, cackling laugh.

"Look what a pretty bird has flown into our cage."

"What an honor, comrade tchekist," rasped another, "that you should choose us for neighbors." And two or three laughed openly at the tchekist's white, frightened face.

But Midjanov and some others took the newcomer's part and asked him to approach and sit down. He came slowly and Midjanov offered him a drink of water which he silently, but gladly, accepted.

He was about thirty years old, and introduced himself as Salamov. Soon he was prevailed upon by those who had just befriended him to tell us his story, how it was that he had been jailed.

At the time, he told us, when Yagoda was eliminated by his successor Yezhov, Salamov was a sergeant of State Security in Kislovodsk, a famous health resort in the Caucasus. Most of the senior NKVD officers were forthwith arrested as soon as Yezhov came to power, including Salamov's own chief, to whose place he was promoted. On assuming his new duties he was ordered to carry out an intensive purge in his district and to arrest all possible enemies of the people. Having had some experience of how to go about such a task, he rounded up practically all the leading members of the Kislovodsk community, including even sanatorium doctors, and, by methods already known to us, incriminated hundreds as "enemies of the people." He fully realized the absurdity of what he was doing but he also knew that, if he were to slacken off, he himself would be liquidated. His chiefs, too, demanded greater efforts on his part and asked for as many as a hundred arrests daily in his district. He succeeded in satisfying his chiefs and within a year attained the rank of captain of State Security. Further, for his dedication in the execution of his duty, he was decorated with the Order of the Red Flag and the Tchekist Medal of Honor. This last is a decoration that in certain circles carries more prestige than the Order of Lenin, and is reserved for members of the NKVD.

At that stage, Salamov considered his position assured and felt that he had only the brightest prospects. He redoubled his efforts in every way in order to entrench himself all the more in the confidence of his superiors. Then, suddenly, Yezhov was deposed and liquidated. His successor, Lavrenti Beria, followed the precedent of eliminating all his predecessor's closest and most trusted assistants. One after the other they were removed and, finally, Sala-

mov's own turn came. He had been dispatched straight to Butirki prison.

He was not aware, he said, why the leaders required so many people to be eliminated for no other reason than that they were potentially capable of criticizing the régime. But one thing had always been clear to him: to criticize the leaders' policy was not his business, in fact it would be his doom. If some squeamishness had prevented him from carrying out his instructions he would immediately have been broken and another more efficient man would have taken his place, so no good would have been served.

In his present position he was completely devoid of hope. He was supremely sure that he would not be allowed to live.

We heard him out in silence until he had finished and then fell to discussing his story amongst ourselves until it was time for the latrines parade. Those in the cell who had goaded and chaffed him from the start wanted him to carry and clean the iron latrine we had in the cell, but the others would not allow the order to be broken and said that his turn would come. He would have to sleep, however, nearest to this horrible article of cell furniture in accordance with custom, as he was the newest arrival. Some while after we were back in the cell, Salamov wished to relieve himself in the iron latrine, but those who saw in him an unforgivable enemy tried to prevent this in order to increase his discomfort. But Midjanov scolded them, asking how they could still consider as an enemy one who had been thrown in among them to share their misery. If the truth were known, he said, we were none of us guilty and yet all guilty. Some of us had reviled as traitors erstwhile comrades who had preceded us to prison and those same were now our comrades again inside this filthy prison, so how could any of us talk of justice?

One thing in particular, I noticed, set Salamov apart from the rest of us. He was not yet physically broken and spiritually apathetic like almost half the members of the cell, and yet his attitude of mind was that of a beaten man. We all of us still entertained at least some glimmering of hope that we would survive the prison nightmare; indeed hope was the only thing, I believe, which kept some of us alive at all. But Salamov had none whatsoever. I asked Midjanov and Gorodietzky what they thought of this and Gorodietzky's answer was as chilling as death.

"He was in the NKVD, my friend," he said. "He *knows* how stupid it is to hope, like a child, for something that will not happen. There is no question of guilt or innocence; he is not wanted any more, and so he must die."

Some married men began to question Salamov, asking him whether women prisoners of the NKVD were brutally treated and raped, and whether he had ever done anything like this himself. He was half scared of his questioners, but he faced them squarely enough and thought for a minute. He said that the question just put to him was rather like asking someone engaged in the enforcement of the land collectivization program whether he had always made sure a peasant was a capitalist before confiscating his goods.

"Have not some of you indirectly seen to it that a peasant family's only cow be taken away, when you know full well that the possession of one cow does not make a man a capitalist? I think you probably have. And why? Because you wanted to be thorough or to avoid criticism for lack of thoroughness.

"If I were to tell you I had never forced a woman you would not believe me even if it were true, and it is not true. Sometimes, I will admit, I have done it because I have wanted to. But many times too I have done it because I had to be cruel. Subordinates are ever watchful of one, and any sign of pity or leniency in my profession is an invitation to trouble."

He spoke very gravely and dispassionately, and the men were impressed in spite of themselves.

"Are you married?" asked one.

"Yes." He nodded slowly. "I have a wife and little son."

"Well," exclaimed one of us with a harsh laugh. "Perhaps here is justice. How do you feel, comrade tchekist, about her safety now?"

"I have no doubt," said Salamov softly, "that my subordinates have raped her many times by now and will do so many times again—if she still lives. The only one of us who may yet live is my little son and that will only happen if we resist them in nothing that they want of us. As for me——" He paused. "I shall think of him and shall do whatever they want."

When he had said this, there was none among us who felt cheap enough to crow at or goad him any longer.

We asked him, did he know how men had been persuaded

to make "confessions" in crowded courtrooms without availing themselves of the publicity?

"There are many ways," he said, "and it depends very much on the man involved. Some idealists can be persuaded that they are no longer needed and will best serve the interests of their country by disappearing in such a manner. But most are more difficult and must be coerced forcibly, usually by destroying any hope they may have of ever obtaining justice and by threats to the lives of their wives and children. Sometimes drugs are used, and sometimes even a double speaks in court as though he were the real prisoner. There was a case once where a man was required to make a public 'confession' of treason and was told that if he did not do it exactly as arranged, his small son would have his head crushed in. The man apparently did not believe that this was said in earnest, and did not do as he was told. His son was picked up by the feet and his head shattered against a wall."

Salamov drew our attention to some of the practical aspects of Soviet law. By law a citizen of the Soviet Union may only be deprived of his liberty for some specific crime and by order of the Public Prosecutor, on whose orders the NKVD acts. But the Public Prosecutor is in fact completely controlled by the NKVD. Further, every accused man has the right to defense by a qualified attorney, but all the attorneys are briefed by the NKVD as to how they must carry out the "defense" of their "clients." Where is there, then, a way out?

They came to fetch Salamov that night at midnight. He was so nervous that his hands shook uncontrollably and he could scarcely fasten his boots. All of us saw this, but I do not think we derived any satisfaction from the sight. By now we had seen that Salamov, unscrupulous as he might be, had been only a little screw in the giant guillotine.

I never heard of him again.

TWELVE

INTERROGATION

SOME DAYS afterward, also at about midnight, I was ordered to get up and accompany the jailer to the interrogation room.

The interrogator, a State Security lieutenant, looked like a contented man. His words to me were very polite.

"Please sit down, Citizen Granovsky," he said.

He handed me five typewritten sheets of paper headed "Report on Interrogation of Accused, A. M. Granovsky," and dated January 30, 1939. That was the date of my first interrogation in the building of the NKVD of the U.S.S.R. On reading the pages I saw that there were several questions written down which had not been made, as well as replies to these questions which, obviously, I had not given. According to this paper I was guilty of spying on Soviet authorities with the intention of finding out who guarded the Politburo members and how they were guarded, discovering the layout of the streets which were used as government thoroughfares and discovering which types of cars were used by the various members of the Politburo. This information was supposedly sought and collected by me in preparation for terroristic acts against the lives of Politburo members. It was stated that I had been arrested in the act of carrying out careful observations concerning the movements of Politburo members to and from the Kremlin. It was declared that I had freely confessed guilt on all points on the occasion of my first interrogation and was therefore accused of anti-Soviet activities in accordance with paragraph 58 of the Soviet Criminal Code.

At the bottom of the first and last page of the report was my signature which I had been obliged to append to a blank sheet of paper during my first interrogation.

When I had finished reading this interesting document the interrogator ordered me to put my signature to each

separate page. I naturally objected to this and tried to explain that, even on the last page, the signature had come first and the text later. He told me calmly that I was a liar, and said that if I did not wish to sign the other pages as I had signed the last, then he would find a way to force me. Though afraid, I nevertheless persisted. The interrogator then pressed a button on his desk and another State Security lieutenant came into the room. The two of them approached me and started to give me the severest beating I have ever had. I was kicked many, many times, whipped with a rubber hose and beaten with a truncheon and an iron bar.

In the West very few people know what it is to be beaten up thoroughly. You are hit once, and you grit your teeth and swear you will not scream or show that you are hurt. But you are hit more and more, you fall down, blood comes, you get terribly hurt everywhere and your mind can scarcely function, then you can't grit your teeth any longer, your jaws come apart—and you scream. You try to dodge the blows, to crawl away, to protect yourself, but your muscles no longer react properly. You ache terribly, and every blow is worse than the last.

When they had finished with me I could not stand without support, but I had not signed the papers—I do not think I could have signed. I was thrown back into my cell. The beating had lasted almost one hour.

In the cell, when I had begun to feel a little better, my comrades offered me some advice. I was still young, they said. If I were to sign what they wanted me to sign, and cause them no trouble, I would get about ten years in Siberia. I would be out at less than thirty years of age. But if I refused, I could see for myself, they would end up by crippling me. I thought of Gorodietsky. For him it was harder than for me to refuse a "confession," but he had refused, and I admired him immensely for it. I wondered if I would be able to last out.

There was a strange thing I had frequently noticed about my comrades. Bitter as they were about their fate, they were not as resentful as I would have expected. They all still seemed to have a vague, tenacious hope that they would one day be freed and return to favor once more. They never openly criticized the Stalinist régime but made unconvincing efforts to justify what had happened to them

and others like them. "When the forest is cut down," they would say, "the little twigs fly."

I had by now been in Butirki for two and a half months and was already terribly tired of the monotonous, bullied, sub-human life we led. Every day it was the same round of hurrying to the latrines and wash taps, bolting the miserable food and going on the daily walk, all interspersed with long periods of complete inactivity.

For our daily walk we were led out into a yard surrounded on three sides by red brick walls some twenty feet high and on the fourth by the prison wall itself. The floor was of asphalt. On the ground were painted two ellipses, one inside the other, about four feet apart and fifty yards around. Here the inmates of each cell were exercised by a slow walk around between the lines for ten minutes each day, under the watchful eyes of the guards placed on platforms at the four corners of the yard. Because of the great number of prisoners to be exercised daily, cellful by cellful, these exercise yards were used continuously from six in the morning until eight at night, and we never knew at what time of day we would be led out for our walk. From our cell we could hear the exercising of other prisoners, and sometimes we heard the unmistakable footfalls of women. Every time we were exercised the same set of regulations, and penalties for their infringement, were read to us. We must walk in pairs without stopping, our hands behind our backs and our eyes fixed on the neck of the man in front. We must not move outside the elliptical pathway between the two white lines either inwards or outwards, and we must remain completely silent. For disobeying any of these instructions, the guards were at liberty to shoot us instantly. Sometimes, from our cell, we heard shots, but we never learned, of course, what they were about.

From December to March, the coldest period of the year, many prisoners were precluded from taking exercise because they had no warm clothing or footwear at all. For four months of every year these men never came in contact with fresh air.

A great problem among us was the dirtiness of our clothes. Only one of us, a man called Schauer of the Hungarian Communist Party, who had a blanket, an extra set of underclothes and a pair of pajamas, could ever

change his clothes. Some of us, on the other hand, had been wearing the same clothes for over two years.

But every three weeks there came a day that we all looked forward to. That was the day when we were allowed to have a bath. Although this really consisted of throwing hot water over ourselves with a tin, we were at least able to give ourselves more or less of a clean-up.

When the day came, we were formed up in our cell and the jailers searched us to make sure that we were taking nothing to the bathroom except a piece of soap. Once in the bathroom we had to strip and hand over those clothes that we could not wash to an attendant who took them off to a disinfectant room where they were treated with intense heat. While that went on we were supposed to take our baths and wash the small clothes that we felt could no longer remain unwashed, even though they would have to be put on again wet as they were. The bathroom, too, was small for so many men, so that not all of us could bathe at the same time. Further, before the healthy among us could proceed with our ablutions, we had first to help the crippled and lame. For the whole cell something just under an hour was allowed. Then, at the end of it, we were given back our disinfected, but still dirty, clothes, to put on over our clean, wet persons. For all these unpleasantnesses, however, it was certainly a day to be looked forward to.

When we marched back to the cell, we invariably found it turned completely upside down after a thorough search made by the jailers to see whether, impossible as it might seem to us, anything had been somehow smuggled into the cell.

The prisoners were sometimes extremely ingenious in their efforts to improvise with all sorts of things to substitute for what had been lost or taken away. Buttons were made out of bread-balls, needles out of matchsticks, tiny knives out of tacks sharpened on the stone floor. This latter was, of course, completely forbidden as a man might easily cut the arteries of his wrist with a tiny knife of this kind and thus commit suicide.

There was one particular in which I believe the authorities of Butirki to have acted with a fair degree of honesty. That was in the delivery of money, or rather the credit for money, that had been sent to the prisoners by their relatives. The maximum that could be left for any prisoner at

any time during a period of one month was fifty rubles, but he was a lucky man who could count on as much as fifty rubles every two, or even three months. I never had any at all. The prisoners never actually saw the money that was sent to them, but whoever got money was told of it and was asked what he wanted to buy from the prison store where a credit was held in his name. The prison official who took the orders used to come around only on Fridays, so that there were usually four or five men with a credit at the shop. These men were given a list of what they were allowed to buy: cigarettes, matches, soap, black or white bread, cheese, salami, sweets, sugar or biscuits—everything of poor quality but highly priced. Fifty rubles at that time could buy, for instance, either 70 lbs. of white bread, 150 lbs. of black bread, 10 lbs. of sugar or 1,250 cigarettes.

The orders were given and when the purchases were delivered the prisoners placed them all on the table in heaps, and then each heap was divided into exactly as many equal portions as there were prisoners in the cell. It did not matter whether a man never received a single ruble or whether he received fifty rubles per month regularly, his share of any bought stuffs was the same as any other prisoner's. Only once did I see a new prisoner take a greater share of something because it had been bought with his money, and for three days that man was treated by the others as if he did not exist. In the end he made a general apology and swore to follow the rule and never commit such another act of selfishness.

There was a library in Butirki jail which must have been stocked well before the Revolution, for all the books that ever found their way into our cell were well-thumbed and dog-eared classics. Once a month the jailer would enter the cell with ten or fifteen books, and take away those we had had from the previous month. We all read the books avidly; it did not matter by whom they were written, Balzac, Hugo, Goethe or Tolstoy, or even whether we had read them before. In these books we tried to find forgetfulness of our position for a little while. They brought us a quiet, fleeting sense of freedom and vicarious enjoyment of the beauties of life, but the sense of loss when the book was finished was worse than ever.

THIRTEEN

PETITION TO BERIA

DURING THE night of April 20 I was called and told to collect my things and follow the jailer. All the prisoners of the cell gathered around to press upon me their advice not to offer resistance but to keep as healthy as I could and perhaps things would turn out for the best in a few years' time. With a strange pang of regret I said goodbye to them all and followed the jailer away. After a trip in the "bread van" I was deposited in the Central Gaol of the NKVD of the U.S.S.R., known better as the Lubianka Prison, where I was searched and told to take the customary hot bath. I was then led into an elevator and taken upwards.

I was surprised when we stepped out of the elevator onto the landing to see that everything about us was clean and neat. I was led along this landing a few steps and put into a cell which gave onto it. Here again I was astonished. The room was pleasant and light, the floor was carpeted and the three beds it contained had spring mattresses.

There were two men in the cell, one of whom I knew very well. He had formerly been chief of the Construction Materials Section of the People's Commissariat for Heavy Industry, and had played an important part in the industrialization program of the Soviet Union. His name was Shatalov; his daughter Zinaida and I had been very great friends at school.

The other man was an ex-botany and micro-biology professor who had been a member of the Academy of Science of the U.S.S.R. Now, amazingly enough, he was accused of terrorism. He was about seventy years old.

I could not overcome my surprise at the appointments of the cell, and seemed to feel the warmth and comfort of it seep into my being and take command of my will. I longed with delight to stretch out, clean and relaxed, on the soft bed, and just drift slowly and luxuriantly into sleep

there. But my companions told me that this kind of room was only another NKVD weapon, a sort of mental softener-up. After months of the hard, cold and cheerless cells we had all been through, they gave a prisoner a taste of some comfort again. Then, if he "confessed" without giving trouble, he was allowed to spend the rest of his prison days in a similar cell—until he was either shot or sent to Siberia. Sometimes a man could be persuaded, like Esau, to trade his whole life for some trivial thing he needed at once, like thirty days and nights in a cell of this kind.

In contrast to the impression given by the cell, I was told, the interrogation procedure here was extremely severe. I must be ready for any extremities of prolonged physical torture, unless I co-operated.

Our meals, too, were no longer simply a nondescript pap, as they had been in Butirki, but consisted of a meat dish preceded by a soup. We were daily exercised for ten minutes, as I had been before, but not in a courtyard. Here it was on the roof of the building in a little square walled around so that only a view of the sky could be had. But the sounds of traffic in the street below could be clearly heard, and this made me sense poignantly that the room where my family lived was less than five hundred yards away, about five minutes' walk!

I lived in this room for three days, and then, in the afternoon, I was called away for interrogation. In a closed elevator I was taken to one of the floors above and led to an interrogation room. In the room were five men standing about, and behind a desk, on which there were several rubber truncheons and iron bars, sat a State Security lieutenant. He was the same one whom I had met at my last interrogation. As soon as I was in the room, he began to shout:

"Listen! We have brought you here to sign these papers and not waste our time."

The papers were pushed across the desk for me to sign. The pen was less than two feet away from my fingers, but with an effort I made no move.

"It does not really matter for you," the lieutenant said impatiently, "whether you sign or not. You will be sent to Siberia for the rest of your life in any case. I can assure you of that, and there you won't even have the status of a street sweeper. If you persist in being difficult, however, it will be

the worse for you," and he indicated the row of weapons on the desk.

At this point, not from fear of what he threatened but from a sudden, hopeless sense of frustration, my nerve gave, and I began to cry quietly. The tears welled up and there was no stemming them. It seemed that, after all, I and all the others deserved something better than this. I was horrified to think that a man could be sent to Siberia to die of overwork, boredom and the cold simply through the whim of a petty official who thought only of getting more rank insignia on his lapels.

The lieutenant was not in the least moved by my emotion, but slowly picking up a length of rubber hose, he struck me viciously across the back and shoulders. I jumped and cried out, whereupon, to my surprise, a tall man in civilian clothes and with a strikingly handsome face came into the room. On his entry, all the men stood stiffly to attention, but he did not give them a glance. He picked up my unsigned "confession" and read it through. He asked me what I knew about the NKVD plainclothesmen who guard the members of the Politburo, and about the streets where the Politburo members drive to and from the Kremlin. I told him exactly what I had told my first interrogator nearly two months before.

Turning his back, the stranger gave orders that I be returned to my cell. That night I was called out and taken downstairs. I was placed in a closed truck and returned to the huge, barnlike hall of Butirki Prison.

This time I was put into cell number 405. As the jailer pushed me through the doorway, I was struck with a sort of shock to the visual sense: everything in the cell was red. The walls, the ceiling, the floor, the tiny window seven feet up, its inverted hood, the weak electric light, the three iron bedsteads and the steel latrine box were all unremittingly red. It was a tiny room, not much more than about six by twelve feet, and there were two men there already.

My cell mates soon told me that the redness of the cell was an old thing, even in Czarist times, and was originally intended for the solitary confinement of prisoners. The red color, always lit, day and night, by a red light, was sufficient in itself after a certain time to drive a man crazy.

The three of us introduced ourselves, and both men said they had known my father. They were called Mickail Isae-

vich Sverdlov (not to be confused with Jakov Sverdlov who, with Lenin, was one of the top five leaders of the Revolution) and Goldfarb.

Goldfarb had been chief editor of the political section of the newspaper *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, the official organ of Communist Youth, having the third largest circulation of any newspaper in the U.S.S.R. For some reason his removal and disgrace had been desired, so he had been accused of espionage for the Germans. Rather than involve his family in the scandal and trouble he had signed a "confession."

He had been a good friend of Ilya Ehrenburg and Karl Radek, the former of whom was just starting out in his career, while the latter was soon to be liquidated.

Sverdlov was Jewish, and was a very old Communist. He had been in the Red Cavalry under Budenny during the Revolution and had won the Order of the Red Flag for valor. Afterwards he had been trained and become an expert in the canning industry and, as such, once paid a visit to the U.S.A. with Mikoyan and others during 1936. On his return, Sverdlov's importance grew and he became Chief of the Central Section of Canning Industries directly subordinated to the People's Commissariat for Food, headed by Mikoyan. But suddenly he was arrested and charged with espionage on behalf of the United States Government.

Sverdlov had always been a loyal servant and supporter of the Soviet Government, but he had been required to sign a full "confession" of guilt. As evidence against him it was pointed out that he possessed an American Parker pen, several American suits of clothes and an American radio-phonograph, all of which he had brought back with him from the U.S.A. Eventually, after many beatings, some resulting in his being hospitalized, he had signed his "confession." Now he was awaiting sentence.

Soon they came to take Goldfarb away. When the jailers came for him he suddenly lost the use of his limbs and, unable to stand, had to be carried limply out. As he disappeared, he cried out, in a voice of helpless despair, "Goodbye, my friends. I am going to be shot."

Sverdlov and I remained alone in the Red Cell. On alternate days we took turns to wax and polish the floor, which had to be kept shining like a mirror. We were exercised daily in a tiny yard of which one of the walls was that of the famous circular Pugachovskaia Tower, built in the time of

Catherine the Great. It was here that the rebel Don Cossack, Yemelian Pugachov, awaited his beheading on the Red Square. The history of his revolt is described in Pushkin's novel *The Captain's Daughter*. Now the tower was rumored to be the place of execution of all prisoners condemned to death.

The longer I remained in the Red Cell the more deeply depressed I felt. I felt, with crushing conviction, that my transfers from jail to jail had only served to bring me finally to a place from which I would never emerge alive.

The cell was on the third floor of the building, right beneath the roof and as it was by now the hottest part of the Moscow summer, the heat and lack of fresh air in the cell were well nigh unbearable. I had now been in jail for five months and the conditions of life had begun to tell on me. The bad food and unsanitary conditions, the beatings and the atmosphere of total oppression had made me lose weight—and faith.

I had begun to be like an animal, living only for the most rudimentary things of life, dominated by hunger and the sense of being trapped, the fear of being hurt and the prospect of death. The left side of my face was a constant agony and was black from a bruise that would not heal, and I saw with an icy chill of horror that my ever more frequent fits of coughing sometimes brought up blood. Had I contracted tuberculosis? I dared not believe it, yet at the same time I could scarcely doubt it. I thought of appealing to the prison for medical treatment, but I remembered Gorodietsky and knew it would be a waste of time.

I fell into a deeper despair than I have ever known before or since, and I ceased to care for almost everything in life. What I craved was the knowledge that I should be allowed to live, but I knew that if I did not find some way of getting out of this prison soon it would be the end for me. I began thinking of my death all day long, and to have strange dreams at night. At that time I never once thought of the greater freedoms, the fine ideals for the sake of which men have been glad to die, freedom of speech, of the press, of political affiliation, of thought. I was overwhelmingly hungry only for the simplest, sensual freedoms. To breathe deep lungfuls of the crisp spring air, to feel one's limbs tingle from a bathe in a clear river, to lie under the warm, yellow sun on the green grass, to be able to run about at will and eat

good food, soft, tender meats and ripe, fragrant fruits, and to feel the sweet nearness of a girl; I thought of all these things long and caressingly, but with the wistful pain of hopelessness.

There is a right that every prisoner has: that of making a petition to anyone in the Soviet Union. Twice every month ink, pens and paper are provided for prisoners to write out their petitions, and nearly every prisoner does. Nothing ever comes of them. They go no further than the wastepaper basket of the prisoner's interrogator as soon as they have been read by him. If the prisoner writes complainingly of the treatment meted out to him he is usually soundly beaten, but if he says nothing of this then he usually simply hears nothing more of his petition. I have never heard of a petition normally reaching its intended destination. However, I remembered that all the petitions that I had seen my comrades write (for I had never bothered to write one myself) had been addressed to their former superiors in the service, or to people not directly connected with the organization responsible for their imprisonment. Now, exploring every possible means of freeing myself from prison, I began to think seriously of writing a petition. I had no great hope of success, but it was something that might, if properly done, bring some relief to my situation.

I remembered Lavrenti Beria, People's Commissar of NKVD, from the time he had walked into the room during my first interrogation after my arrest, and I felt sure that, if he remembered me at all, he would know that I was not guilty of the crimes imputed to me. The next time writing material was supplied, therefore, in the first week of July, I set out the following petition:

Dear Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria,

Please forgive the trouble I am causing by sending this petition.

Perhaps you will remember having made an inspection visit to an interrogation room on the night of January 29, 1939, where one of your captains of State Security was interrogating me. I hope that the captain of State Security forwarded you a report to the effect that I was not arrested for any crime, but had requested my arrest in order to get in touch with the higher authorities of the Central Section of State Security in order to find out what crimes my father

had committed. My conscience is clear and I am sure it will be easy for you to see that I have never committed any crimes against the Soviet Union, the Soviet Government or our dear leader Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin.

During the five months I have spent in prison I have observed that everything that has been done by the NKVD has been just and right. I have no doubt that this efficient organization, the NKVD, acted always for the best. Thus, if the NKVD cannot give me the chance to see my father or to have news of him, then it must be for a very good reason.

I therefore beg, dear Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria, that you order my release and, if possible, have me watched by someone from the NKVD so that I may be able to prove that I am no enemy of the Soviet structure, the Soviet Government, our dear leader Stalin or the people of the Soviet Union.

Respectfully,
Anatoli Mickailovich Granovsky.

Thus I wrote, and thus indirectly I renounced my father.

FOURTEEN

THE PROMISE

WHEN I handed in my petition I had come to a definite conclusion: I must forget my father, or, at least, I must abandon all hope of ever seeing him again and never dream of his return. He would no longer constitute a contributing factor in whatever awaited me. From now on there would be no one to give me help. I must rely on myself alone.

But I began to feel more sanguine about the results of my petition than I had when I composed it. There were no breaches of form in it, I had refrained from addressing Beria as "comrade" since I was a prisoner and he a free man, and I felt that since it was addressed to their chief, none of the interrogators would like to risk intercepting it. And Beria was the only man, apart from Stalin, who was then powerful enough to treat me fairly, if he chose, without incurring any personal risk to his own reputation. Furthermore, I had humbled myself, which was one of the things they wanted. I began to have hope, though the waiting was continually more irksome.

Three days later I was called to interrogation. On being brought into the room I met a new lieutenant who politely asked me to sit down. I had no sooner done so than someone brought in a tray with a pot of tea, two glasses, a bowl of sugar, a little dish of sliced lemons and a plate of ham and salami sandwiches. The lieutenant asked me to have a glass of tea with him and to help myself to some sandwiches. He then began what was probably the most humane interrogation for many years in Butirki Prison.

He asked me a question and wrote it down on a sheet of paper, and, as I answered, he wrote down my answer too. The interrogation lasted five hours and I answered truthfully every question put to me. There was no shouting, no

angry words, no sense of ordering and obeying. The questions and answers covered practically every phase of my life up to the time of my arrest. At the end he asked me to read what he had written and, if I found it correct, to sign each page. I found it was indeed correct, and so signed as requested without reservation. He then pressed a button on his desk and two jailers entered the room. Without another word he motioned with his hand for them to take me away.

On returning to my cell I refrained from telling Sverdlov what had happened; it was too early for too much hope. But I knew things had taken a turn for the better and I realized, although it had not been mentioned, that it was as a result of my petition.

On July 20, while Sverdlov and I were eating our lunch of *shchi*, boiled cabbage leaves, I was again called to interrogation. I did not finish my food but got up immediately to go.

In the interrogation room stood the same lieutenant who had conducted the last session, but no sooner had I entered than another door opened and the objectionable officer, the one who had beaten me up once and had struck me with a rubber hose during my third interrogation, walked in. He called us to attention, and, standing stiffly erect himself, began to read from a sheet of paper he held before him.

"Decision of the Special Council, Moscow, July 20, 1939," he read, and proceeded to the effect that, after examination of the case against the accused, myself, etc., indicted for crimes of espionage, in accordance with paragraph fifty-eight, point ten, of the Criminal Code of the U.S.S.R., the Special Council consisting of the People's Commissar of the NKVD of the U.S.S.R., the Prosecutor of the U.S.S.R. and the President of the Military Court of the U.S.S.R., had come to the decision to put the prisoner at liberty, to collect from him a written promise not to divulge State secrets which had come to his knowledge during imprisonment, to advise the prisoner to cease trying to find out more about his father who was a convicted enemy of the people, and to consider his liberation effective as from midnight on July 20-21, 1939. The document bore the signatures of Beria and Vishinsky.

The interrogators told me to sign the document to testify that it had been read to me, which I did.

I was then given a piece of paper and ordered to put down the heading "Promise," and then write the following:

"I, Anatoli Mickailovich Granovsky, hereby solemnly swear never to speak of or communicate to anyone, including members of my own family, anything of what I have seen or what has happened to me during my past term of imprisonment. I have been advised that a breach of this oath will incur my immediate apprehension and conviction on the charge of betraying State secrets, for which the punishment is to be shot without right to trial."

Having written this out I signed it.

The interrogators then both shook me by the hand and called me "comrade," one of them being he who had gloatingly told me that I would be sent to rot in Siberia.

A meal was set out on the table, and I was invited to partake of it. I set to heartily. I was also given a copy of that day's *Pravda*, the first newspaper I had seen in almost six months. When I had finished my meal I was taken into another room where my interrogators left me alone to read the newspaper, locking the door behind them.

Some two hours later a jailer came to bring me back to the interrogation room where I found, besides the two lieutenants, another young man in civilian clothes who behaved and was treated as though he was their superior in rank. He ordered me to sit down and, walking nervously to and fro in front of me, spoke more or less as follows:

"You appealed to the NKVD and to People's Commissar Comrade Beria to liberate you and give you the opportunity to prove your loyalty to the State. You wish to enjoy the privileges of every honest Soviet citizen. You wish to have the doors of a happy future open to you just as they are to all Soviet youths who are not connected with enemies of the people, spies, saboteurs and Trotskyists. But," and here he stopped in his pacing and looked at me, "you are the son of an important enemy of the people. You are young, and in order to earn the right to these privileges you must prove yourself worthy from now on by your loyalty to the Soviet Union and to our dear leader Comrade Stalin.

"The Central Section of State Security, GUGB, of the NKVD of the U.S.S.R., has decided to offer you the

chance of joining the GUGB to become a secret agent. We want only volunteers for this very important and honorable service. If you accept this offer, and by your faithful execution of orders prove your loyalty, the GUGB will help you anywhere, everywhere and in all ways and you will have far greater opportunities for your future than ordinary citizens. You will also actively help the Soviet Government to build up a Communist society all over the world. The GUGB assists the Comintern in preparing the proletariat for revolutions in all capitalist countries, it takes active measures to rid Soviet society and foreign society of anti-Soviet elements. Every member of the GUGB has thus specially good possibilities to make a brilliant future for himself, to grow and gain power, to win special Government decorations and honors. Thus, if you take the offer, you have waiting for you an interesting, secure and wonderful career."

He came to a stop in front of me suddenly and asked: "Well? Do you accept or not?"

He looked hard at me, his attitude demanding a quick answer. So this was the catch, I thought. I would be given my liberty on condition that I joined forces with my captors. The release order that had been read to me would be no more than a joke if I refused the offer. I would be re-arrested in less than a day, and if that happened I would never gain my freedom again.

"Yes," I said. "I will accept the offer."

He then gave me a piece of paper telling me to write the date, "Moscow" and the word "Promise" on top, and then take down his dictation. I wrote down as follows:

"This promise is given to the GUGB of the NKVD of the U.S.S.R., in which I, Anatoli Mickailovich Granovsky, bind myself to execute and obey immediately all orders given me by the GUGB. I swear to report to the GUGB all anti-Soviet activities that come to my notice. I swear to talk to no one, including members of my own family, concerning my work for the GUGB. I shall sign all reports written by myself concerning my duties with the pseudonym . . ."

He stopped and told me to think of a name, either family or animal or object, or even a number, by which I would henceforth be known. The first thing that came to my mind was a particular type of sweet I had so often wanted to eat during the past six months on the wrapping of which is

reproduced a picture called "The Bears in the Wood" by the famous Russian painter Shishkin. I said I would use the name Shishkin. He agreed and told me to continue writing.

". . . Shishkin."

He then told me to sign my full name and, in brackets below, the pseudonym "Shishkin."

Taking up the paper he folded it carefully and put it in his breast pocket. He then shook my hand and said:

"My name is Valentin Vasilyevich Makeev. From now on I am your chief." Makeev then gave me a telephone number, K-6-48-20, and ordered me to telephone him next day at two o'clock in the afternoon. He asked me whether there was a telephone where I lived and, on being told there was, told me not to use it but to use only dial telephones in public *kiosks*, and even then to pay careful attention that I should not be overheard. He gave me my release certificate, number 396, signed by the chief of the First Special Section of the NKVD of the U.S.S.R., and dated July 20, 1939.

From the telephone number that Makeev had given me I at once knew two things: first, by the letter K, that it was in the Central or Kremlin district of Moscow, and second, by the combination K-6, that it belonged to the NKVD. Such numbers are all NKVD numbers and are never found in the telephone directory.

The two *tchekist* lieutenants, who had been asked to leave the room while Makeev's conversation with me was in progress, were now called back and told to see that I was returned all my belongings. Makeev then expressed his regret that he could not have me released until after midnight and that I would have to spend the time until then in one of the bathroom-like cells that had been my first habitation in Butirki. There would, however, be a bench in it for me to sit on, I would have a good meal and a copy of *Pravda* to read. He then took his leave and a jailer led me to my cell. My belongings and small odds and ends, left by me in the Red Cell, were returned to me there.

I was once more a full Soviet citizen, or would be within a very few hours. Long live Comrade Stalin!

PART TWO

SPY AND COUNTER-SPY

ONE

K-6-48-20

A KEY in the lock, and the door of my cell was thrown open. A guard with a hard face stood on the threshold.

"Get up and come with us," he ordered.

I stood up, dropped my copy of *Pravda* and took up my little bundle of clothes.

"Hurry," snapped the guard impatiently. "Outside!"

I saw there were two of them, one pointing his pistol at my chest, out of habit, no doubt, as I was already a free man.

This last began the usual recital.

"Look to your front. Keep your hands behind your back. Don't move. . . ."

"Yes, I know," I said.

"SILENCE!" he roared.

He continued his recital of instructions and I thought, has something gone wrong? Am I not free after all?

I was marched along the corridors to the prison director's office where, for a signed receipt, I was given back my scarf, tie, belt, cuff links and passport which had been taken from me on my arrest. Then on through the labyrinth of corridors and courtyards, the guards' boots ringing on the asphalt flooring in the silence of the night. An irrational fear took hold of me. A hitch and all would be the same again. No release. Think of it!

The sergeant of the watch took a paper the guards gave him, unlocked a door and motioned for me to get out. Here it was at last.

"*Dosvidanie*," he said, rather as an American would say, "I'll be seeing you." I swallowed and nodded my head. A pleasant fellow, the sergeant of the watch!

Stars in the sky. No walls and ceilings caging me. Geographical distance visible before my eyes. It all came as an awareness that made my knees weak and my bowels tremble. I could sit or stand, walk or run, talk or sing, all just as I liked. But I did not react. A germ had already infected the blood, a germ of suspicion, of reserve. I could not yet trust the newness of my situation.

Down Novoslobodskaia Street, across Sverdlov Place and past the Bolshoi Theater. People were looking at me—I must have looked strange to them in midsummer with my skiing trousers on. Soon I would see Mother, dear scared Mother. And Valentin and little Volodia. I would buy him some honeycake, the best and sweetest honeycake. But I forgot. I had no money at all. No, but tomorrow I would phone. Not tomorrow, today. K-6-48-20, Comrade Makeev. Surely I would get money then? How surprised they would all be at home to see me back, how surprised and glad. But wait! Were they still at home? Mightn't they have been moved away? I walked faster and faster, and in my mind, like the tick of a clock, K-6-48-20, K-6-48-20—*Comrade Makeev*.

Soon I was knocking on the door of our old room. There was a shuffling inside and then Mother's voice came tremulously:

"Who is it?"

"It is I, Tolya."

I thought I heard a little cry, then the door opened a crack. It opened a little wider, and then I was in the room and the door was closed, and Mother and Valentin were kissing me. I picked up sleepy little Volodia and nearly crushed him into my chest.

My mother looked at my bruised cheek.

"What is the matter with your poor cheek, Tolya?"

"A silly fall, mother," I answered casually. "It does not trouble me."

There was a little pause as we all looked at each other. None of us knew where to begin.

"You really are incredibly thoughtless, Tolya," said Mother at last. "How could you leave us as you did without saying a word? I was nearly distracted, especially after get-

ting your letter and finding the other one in your coat pocket. The *tchekists* came and turned the place upside down and questioned us. Oh, how they questioned us! But, my poor boy, you must be hungry."

She offered me a plate of potato soup and I accepted gladly.

Finally the question came.

"And your father? Did you hear anything of him?"

"No, mother," I said slowly. "I heard absolutely nothing." Why tell her about Midjanov? It might lead to indiscretions I could no longer afford.

We were silent, as out of respect for a forlorn memory. And then I saw that mother was looking at me strangely, with a sudden look of fear in her eyes.

"What is it, Mother?" I asked.

She put out her hand and let it rest on my knee, but it was a touch only, there was no weight of welcome in it. I felt that.

"Tolya," she said, "you have been in prison, haven't you?"

"Why, yes, mother."

"Do not misunderstand it, my son, but I must ask you a question. How is it that you are free? No one is ever set free."

So my presence meant danger to them, and the tie of blood was strained.

"How do you think I got out then? Escaped?" Harshness and bitterness came into my voice when that was the last thing I wanted.

"Do not ask like that, Tolya. Were you really set free?"

"Of course," I said shortly, dismissing the subject.

But it was not to be dismissed.

"Forgive me, Tolya, but can you show me something that will prove it?"

The happiness had gone. With slow deliberation I produced my release certificate and showed it to her. She studied it a long time, but I could see that she was not satisfied. I was angry to see that she did not trust me, that she was afraid of me.

"Mother," I said quietly, "I am not here to hurt you. I have come back home because I want to help you. Do not be suspicious of me. Believe me, I think of you and the others more than young brother Valentin or you have

ever thought of me. Did you ever try to find out where I was and leave me fifty rubles like I used to do with father, so that I might be able to get a stick of soap, a little extra food or some cigarettes?"

She did not answer.

Dawn was about to break and I was very tired. I remembered that I must make that phone call at two in the afternoon, so I had better sleep while there was yet time and opportunity. I took off my boots and lay out on the bed.

"Mother, I must sleep," I said.

"Of course you must, poor Tolya," she said. "We will not disturb you. Here, put this pillow under your head." She hesitated a second and asked, "Before you fall asleep, Tolya, just let me have that release certificate again, will you? I want to show it to one or two of the neighbors."

"I do not have to justify myself to them," I said, already with my eyes closed. Consciousness drained from my brain and the last thing to leave me was the refrain, K-6-48-20, K-6-48-20.

TWO

COMRADE MAKEEV

WHEN I awakened later in the morning I had an attack of coughing such as I had had very frequently of late in prison. I succeeded in choking a great deal of it in my throat and brought up no blood, but my mother was worried.

"You are sick, Tolya. What is the matter?"

I was still trying to keep my cough down but managed to force a reply.

"A little bronchitis, Mother," I wheezed.

"You must go to the clinic as soon as you can. It is dangerous to neglect these things."

"I will go," I said. "This afternoon."

But I did not go there that afternoon. I went instead to one of the public phone *kiosks* at the entrance to the Bolshoi Theater and dialed K-6-48-20.

A man's voice answered.

"I wish to speak to Comrade Makeev," I said. There was a slight pause.

"Who is speaking?" the voice questioned.

The pause had made me alert and I remembered.

"Shishkin," I said firmly.

"Hold the line," was the prompt reply.

I waited a few seconds and Makeev's voice, easily recognizable, came on the wire. After greeting me shortly he said:

"Where are you now? At the Bolshoi Theater? Listen, go and sit on one of the benches in Sverdlov Place, in the garden, and watch for me. When I pass make no sign of recognition but get up and follow at a distance. When I stop you carry on walking and pass close by me. As you do this I will tell you where we are to meet. Do you understand?"

"Exactly, comrade."

"Expect me, then." And he hung up.

All this did not, at the time, strike me as ridiculous or theatrical. It was just a very appropriate beginning, I

thought, for a career that would be exciting, dangerous and, above all, different from the normal. I made my way quickly to the gardens in Sverdlov Place, with the NKVD building quite nearby, and took my place attentively on one of the benches. My attitude was studiously unconcerned. I had begun to act, I had begun to dissimulate, not for a definite purpose but because it would be part of my job, part of my life, and the sooner I got used to it the better. I would have to accustom myself to dissimulation like a cripple to a crutch.

I had not long to wait before Makeev swaggered by as though he had not seen me. I waited a little and then followed. He seemed to take no account of the fact that my physical condition was rather reduced after my stay in prison, for he walked at a fine pace across the street, in and out of the sporadic traffic, giving me quite a job to keep him in sight. At length he stopped at the corner of Pushkin Street like a man who has set his course for A but who wonders if, on the way, he may not just call in on B. I walked past, close by and straining my ears.

He did not utter a syllable.

Nonplused and anxious, I walked on without turning my head. He soon passed me again and, in a minute or two, drew to a stop as he had before. As I passed I thought he would be quiet again, but:

"Round the corner at Vasilievsky Alley," he muttered.

I made my way there at my leisure. He overtook me and preceded me into an apartment building. As he entered the elevator I heard him say, "Eighth." I took the next elevator and got out on the eighth floor. One of the two doors opposite me was slightly ajar. I walked in to see Makeev standing behind the door. He led me into a drawing-room beyond the hall. I saw a wide hearth which divided the far wall, and surrounding it a suite of leather-upholstered armchairs and a settee. A rosewood bookcase stood against the wall opposite the fireplace, thick blue whipcord curtains hung at the two windows and a Caucasian carpet covered the floor. At one corner, near one of the windows, was a massive desk behind which Makeev seated himself, motioning for me to sit front of him.

He could not have been more than about twenty years old, but his air of supreme self-confidence impressed me. Very erect in his bearing, he seemed taller than he was, and

the penetrating expression in his very dark eyes, set in a white face topped by black hair, made me hope that I would not have to lie to him.

He asked me how well I knew Moscow, saying that the better I knew the city the better it would be for me. Then he told me why he had taken such enormous "precautions" in arranging that day's interview. It was no more than a test to see how I reacted and how well I could follow instructions without repetitions. Also:

"It is best," he said, "to get into the habit right from the beginning to take all precautions with our work. Better to take a hundred times more precautions than seem necessary than to take too little and spoil the work of months, maybe years even."

He leaned forward, his forearms resting on the desk.

"Our new leader," he said, "Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria, has introduced a radical change in one of the departments of our profession, that of incriminating enemies of the people. We now concentrate on doing it before rather than after arrest. In the long run this is much cheaper and less troublesome because, after all, when a man is in jail circumstances are of necessity no longer conducive to his incrimination."

I nodded. Under the new system, I thought, I might never have been arrested, even though I would certainly have been watched after my visit to Lenin's tomb.

"This means," Makeev continued, "that our work must be conducted with the utmost discretion and caution vis-à-vis the outside world. A counter-espionage agent has a paramount duty to the government: he must not allow himself to be uncovered. Whatever happens, an agent must always be anonymous to the people with whom he has to consort, otherwise he is a failure. I will put it bluntly: an uncovered agent is a dead man. His usefulness to the State is at an end."

He gave me a cigarette, took one and lit them both.

"You are going to start working immediately, or, rather, as soon as you have had proper medical treatment. You will be an active counter-espionage agent and your hunting-ground will be among the students, young artists and intellectuals, but principally among those whose fathers have been arrested as enemies of the people. There are many thousands of them in Moscow, so it is a very large field. It

should be extremely easy for you to gain their confidence as your position is the same as theirs."

He said many more things—things dealing with the basic precepts of counter-intelligence work—and asked me innumerable questions about some of the people I knew, especially Igor Peters who, despite his father's arrest, was still known to be friendly with Stalin's son Vassily. But his first few words had disturbed me.

I had not been prepared for this. So I would have to spy on my old friends! I was being told to use my father's tragedy to further the ends of the State and as a weapon against those who had suffered the same misfortune as I had.

The excitement I had felt left me, and was replaced by depression.

Makeev went on talking, and I began to understand that he liked the sound of his own voice. The discovery of this weakness in him did me good. I made a note of it in my mind with satisfaction. He said I now belonged to the 5th Branch of the Second Section of the GUGB, but that I must never go anywhere near its offices. I would later be allowed the privilege of using the NKVD stores, where substantial reductions were to be had on all goods, but for the time being I would have to do without this as it would not be wise to risk having any radical improvement in my condition noticed. He said that all permissible expenses connected with my work would be paid, and that my salary would be 500 rubles per month. He advanced me 500 on the spot for which I signed a receipt.

Makeev arranged over the phone for me to be received at the Bodkin Hospital and told me to go there and stay as long as the doctors required.

I went a little out of my way to call home first and leave 250 rubles with my mother. I told her that I had managed to borrow it and she looked at me a little worriedly but said nothing. I don't suppose she had borrowed money even in the direst extremity. But while I was in jail Valentin had started to work as a fitter in the ZIS (Stalin Moscow Automobile Factory) and brought home 120 rubles per month, a bare minimum. I also told Mother that I was on my way to the hospital and that I would be cured in a few days.

"Which hospital, Tolya?" she asked.

"Bodkin Hospital, Mother," I said. "But I want to ask you

not to visit me. The doctor at the clinic said I would need complete rest for a while."

"If you do not want to see me, Tolya, I will not go," she said a little petulantly. "But how is it you are going there? That is no place for us."

She meant that it was too good for us. I realized that I should not have mentioned the name and she might begin to suspect. It was so easy to make trifling mistakes.

"That is where the doctor told me to go," I said with a shrug. "I suppose it suits him best. There are poor wards there, too, you know, Mother."

"Thank you for the money, Tolya," she said as she kissed me. "Get well soon so that we can be together again."

Together!

THREE

LOYALTY TO NONE

I PRESENTED myself to the director who gave instructions that I was to be well treated.

What I immediately liked about Bodkin Hospital, although it is true that I had a slight twinge of suspicion about it, was the politeness with which I was treated there. I was not told to do anything, as one is at a public clinic, but was most courteously asked. I was asked to have a hot bath, asked if I would change into hospital clothes, shown to my ward and asked if I would go to bed without disturbing the other two patients who were asleep.

And the bed! In comparison with the things I had grown used to sleeping on in the last six months it was superb. I slept like a dog.

But I awoke very early next morning. I could not remember having dreamt anything. I seldom dreamt and only when sorely tired, as in jail, or if I did dream I never remembered. But something during my sleep had made me awaken with the remembrance of what my job would be on leaving the hospital. Makeev had said it: I would have to spy on my friends. And my murdered father, or my imprisoned father, or my tortured father would be a bait to entice their indiscretion. I had almost taken it for granted that on joining the NKVD my work would have nothing to do with my former friends. It was still dark as I lay there on my back in the comfortable bed and I knew I must think this thing out. Even when one sees one is trapped one must think.

Of course, it was quite logical. It was the most logical thing in the world. I belonged to two conflicting parties, one of which could hurt me while the other could not. It was quite logical that I should be asked to serve the former by betraying the latter. What reason had I to expect sentiment to sway the stronger party one way or the other? None. If I

was dejected it meant I was a child. And yet . . . "betray" is a horrid word. I must not become confused.

I felt the comfort of the bed. I remembered the polite treatment of the nurses, the 500 rubles I had received, the relief that my family would get, even for a few days, from the money I had left with mother. I remembered Butirki Prison, and the degradation in which we had lived for the year before that. Had anyone helped us then? Bruskin had helped, but Bruskin was gone, liquidated. But what about the others on our side of the fence, had any of them offered help? Rubles and kopecs apart, the help of a hand to lift a heavy cupboard, the help of a visit, of a kind word? No one had helped, only Erik Korkmasov who had posted a letter to my mother. Who were my friends, then? As I lay quietly awake in the dark, I almost smiled to myself with relief. I had no friends. I owed loyalty to none but those who could exact it from me—and to myself.

Three doctors examined me. They prescribed infra-red treatment for my cheek, which was still slightly discolored and swollen, and an operation for my hernia. So I had a hernia! I had not known.

The doctors, all young men, were peculiar in a way I notice more now in retrospect than I did at the time. They showed an extraordinary exclusiveness of purpose and evinced no human interest for me, as a person, at all. A gardener would have had more sympathy with his cabbages than they had with me. The affected parts of my body would remain clear in their professional minds, but my face disappeared. No questions were asked as to how my cheek had become bruised, what I had been doing to get a hernia or to be as run down as I was. They minded their own business and kept their noses clean. Their business was mending bodies, not asking questions which might elicit embarrassing or evasive replies.

Three days later I climbed on to the operating table and a male nurse shaved my stomach. The surgeon who walked in to operate was a woman, to my instinctive surprise and no little discomfort. She set to with dispatch. My eyes were bandaged and I was given a local anaesthetic. Soon, feeling no pain, I heard the sound of the knife scraping a cut in my flesh and felt the warmth of living gut laid out on my belly where the anaesthetic had not reached.

"May I see what you are doing?" I asked the surgeon.

"If you want to," she said, and ordered the bandage to be removed from my eyes.

I wanted to be sure that the sight would not make me feel sick, and when it did not I was glad I had looked.

At length, in the heat and heavy summer fragrance of mid-August, I was discharged from the hospital, a new man in mind as in body. The first thing I did was phone Makeev to tell him I was out, but I am sure he knew already. We fixed an appointment and then I went home.

Home to the same small, overcrowded, stuffy, overinhabited room. Home to climb over Valentin's bed in order to lie on my own. Home to smell the pool beneath, now worse than ever in the summer heat. Home to the passive misery from which I was beginning to escape, and to find escape for those who shared it with me in that room, though I could never tell them so.

"Are you better now, Tolya, my son?" The same worried look, that flickering apprehensiveness about the aging eyes that I was beginning to hate, because it made me sad. Couldn't she understand that I could not be her frank, ingenuous boy any longer? That from now on I was dealing in life and death and could not talk freely, could not quiet her doubts? All the same I tried.

"Mother," I said, "come here."

Her clothes were baggy and worn out, and her shoulders curved inward like fallen leaves in autumn. She moved towards me shyly, unaccustomed to this intimacy from me. She stood before me looking up, her eyes below the level of my chin, and it was with a conscious effort that I smiled and put my arms about her shoulders.

"Do not worry, Mother," I whispered, "I am doing all I can, and I think I shall succeed. We will soon have more money for food and clothes."

"I am sure, Tolya. Where are you going to work?"

There it was again. Fear that her little boy did not know what he was doing, while she knew even less than I of the world in which we lived.

"I am not sure yet, Mother. But I shall soon be working and I shall tell you when I know."

FOUR

THE ASSIGNMENT

MAKEEV TOLD me that I would be joining the army, principally as a cover for my real work, though of course I would have to carry out whatever military duties fell to me just as if there were no other work. I was to present myself to the Moscow PVO (Anti-Aircraft Defense) School where I would be admitted after the normal preliminaries.

I went there and filled in the usual exhaustive questionnaire about my schooling, parentage, grandparentage, ideological convictions (conventional), pretensions (patriotic), etc., etc. The following day I was admitted. Battalion Commissar Kirianov, who conducted the interview, by the cursory way he glanced at my questionnaire and the almost deprecatory gesture which accompanied the act, gave me the impression that he had been instructed to admit me in any case.

He described shortly to me the scope of the course offered and I joined one which would qualify me to take command of and coordinate a local anti-aircraft defense post. Later I drew the green uniform and black boots of a cadet of the air defense service and was ready to start my duties the following day.

I was in a group of about sixty students most of whom, apart from myself and a few officers on refresher or re-qualification courses who were allowed to live outside, were conscripts living in barracks. The day started at 7:30 in the morning and ended at 6:00 in the evening with a half-hour break for lunch at midday. After six o'clock we were served supper and I was free to go. Right from the beginning and through to the end of the course, which was very thorough but which I need not go into as it is not particularly germane to my story, out of each daily ten-hour instruction period a full two and a half hours were taken up by political

indoctrination classes and lectures on the history of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party.

I was allowed one week to get into the swing of things at the school and then I had to report to Makeev as a prelude to starting my real duties. One Sunday morning we had a long session in the same apartment at Vasilievsky Alley.

He was already there, when I arrived, smoking a cigarette in an elegant holder. He glanced at me as I came in reporting in the military manner I had just learned, but did not get up from behind his desk. He was probably trying out his cigarette holder for the first time because he did not seem quite at home with it. It stuck up from his face at an angle of some sixty degrees and his chin protruded oddly in his effort to clamp the thing firmly between his teeth. He emitted a bifurcate cloud of smoke through his nostrils and jerked his chin at my chair. I sat down. In his hand I noticed that he had a large sheaf of papers closely typewritten. He pushed a pen and some blank sheets of paper over to me.

"Listen," he said. "I am going to read you a list of names and I want you to write down all those you already know. You'll see why afterwards." And he started to read the names in alphabetical order.

I soon realized who they were—relatives of enemies of the people. I covered about four pages of foolscap with the names I knew. When he saw my list Makeev was very interested. He began to ask questions about nearly every one of the people whose names I had written down, but he was most interested when he came to Igor Peters.

Everybody who knew the names of the original leaders at the time of the Revolution knew who Igor's father had been. As soon as the revolutionary forces had succeeded in Petrograd the first Tche-Ka was formed by Felix Dzerjinsky, and Peters was his right-hand man. The Tche-Ka was the dreaded secret police, the forerunner of the OGPU and the NKVD, later called the MVD when commissariats became ministries. Before his arrest in 1937, Peters had been chief of the Special Section of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks, of which the principal duty was the dovetailing of aims and measures decided upon independently by the Central Committee of the Party and the NKVD. The section was thus responsible

for the smooth interworkings of the two most powerful arms of the Soviet machine.

"What do you know about Igor Peters?" asked Makeev.

"I used to know him well enough, Comrade Makeev," I said. "Then he lost both his father and mother. They were both arrested. I learned later that he had renounced them and has since been relatively fortunate compared with the rest of us. His aunt who lives in the Metropole Hotel has taken him in to live with her. It is very comfortable there, you know. He used to be Vassily Stalin's best friend in the old days, but I believe they stopped seeing each other after Igor's parents were arrested."

"Excellent," exclaimed Makeev. "And now I will tell you something. Igor continues living in the Metropole at room number 35. He and his aunt are both allowed this comfort because an uncle of his is carrying out a responsible job for the Soviet Government abroad, and it is mainly out of consideration for his position that we do not wish to offend Igor and his aunt without reason. It is generally felt, you see, that Igor's father and mother were arrested prematurely, although there can be little doubt that they were enemies all right. But we must be more patient with the rest of the brood. Another thing. Vassily Stalin and Igor Peters continue to see each other and are known to be good friends. Perhaps you don't understand what potentialities this situation offers."

"I'm afraid I don't," I said, after a moment's pause.

"Comrade Stalin, of course, must be informed that his son Vassily sees Igor Peters. Now just imagine what it would mean for the team of *tchekists* who could prove that Igor is a real anti-revolutionary! Why, we would have the same gratitude as if we had saved Vassily's life. There would be decorations, promotions perhaps." Makeev spoke with an excitement that did not go well with the urbane manner he affected. "We would also be rendering a great service," he added shortly.

"I see what you mean," I said, with a little more respect than I felt.

"Well, let's get down to details," he said, putting another cigarette in his holder. "Take another piece of paper and write down what I tell you."

This is what was dictated to me:

Secret operative Shishkin is requested to make contact

with and establish close social relations with the following relatives of enemies of the people with a view to obtaining evidence of an incriminating nature which, should it not be naturally forthcoming, should be provoked: Nadia Belenkaia; Alexander, Boris and Rosa Kulkov; Igor Peters; and any others whose names he has heard read to him and has recognized and with whom he may conveniently come in contact.

"New paragraph," said Makeev.

I then wrote:

The objective is clear. There are no questions.

I was told to sign this, which I did.

"You will have to prepare yourself intellectually a little for your contact with these people and their friends," said Makeev with a smile. "I suggest you make good use of a library and read up, in any spare moments you have, such things as art, literature, the theater and anything else likely to be a subject of conversation among the intelligentsia. You will report to me regularly in writing, either here or somewhere else according to my orders, and you will come to me regularly for instructions. One thing above all: learn to rely on your memory. Use it as much as you can. You will not overload it, it is like a muscle which grows and becomes more efficient with use. Never carry anything with you that might possibly lead to your being uncovered. Everything you hear, names, dates, places, must all be carried with you in your mind until you can meet me and write it all out. That is the only way, and if you are unequal to it you will have failed. You know what failure means?"

I knew what failure meant, all right.

"There is one more thing, Shishkin," said Makeev. "The better you work the better you will be looked after. You will not have to worry any more about food and clothes and shelter. You must live for your work, and your work will provide the means for your livelihood."

Thus I left Makeev with my task fairly clearly defined, but with no clear idea of how to go about it.

FIVE

IGOR PETERS

I WAS then at the very bottom of the ladder in the NKVD and had a long way to climb. But I was already quite well off financially. However, I soon became so busy that I had practically no time to think of that. For after the daily ten hours at school I had an hour's homework to do and then had to get down to the real work. Throughout this period I do not suppose I had more than four hours' sleep a night.

I started on my round of visits during the evenings, began to re-establish contacts I had lost, and submitted my reports to Makeev. They were clumsy and inexperienced at first, but I soon became more confident.

"Operative Report.

"For GUGB, NKVD, U.S.S.R.

"Last night from 21.10 hours to 22.45 hours I was with Alexander Kulkov, in his room. During that time apart from Alexander and myself only his mother was present. We drank four tumblers of vodka each which he supplied. We talked about the war and he said: 'The Germans are not our friends.'

" 'But only last month Ribbentrop signed a ten-year non-aggression pact with our government, Alexander,' I said.

" 'Yes, I know,' he said, 'but I don't think the Germans intend to keep to it.'

" 'Then our government must be foolish to trust them.'

" 'If they do trust them,' he laughed. 'But I do not think we intend to keep to the agreement either any longer than it suits us.'

" 'You mean we are just as treacherous as the Germans?'

" 'When you make friends with a murderer you must be prepared to use your knife,' he said.

" 'Maybe that's how the Germans feel,' I laughed.

" 'Who knows?'

" 'Anyhow,' I persisted, 'I do not believe that they are

our friends as the newspapers say any more than you do. I wonder why the government tries to deceive us.'

"'It is very difficult to govern,' he said. 'I think they know best what they are doing. Anyhow, the policy has been decided on by Stalin, and there is the end to it.'

"And he would not talk about it any more.

"This is a typical reaction to any talk on a political subject with this class of people. There seems to be a very strong feeling of solidarity among them, of common identity. They do not consider themselves primarily as exercisers of their various professions and trades, as other Soviet citizens do, but rather as a group identified by their common misfortune. They are the dispossessed. But they are resigned. It seems that their natures do not urge them to active counter-revolutionary measures, they prefer to make the best of things as they are. Some of them, I am sure, do hate the régime because they have lost by it individually, but no expression is given of this hate."

Makeev read the report impassively. When he had finished it he folded it and put it in his pocket.

"I do not think you are doing your best, Shishkin," he said quietly.

I froze.

"I assure you I am, Comrade Makeev," I replied. "These people avoid political issues in conversation. They are frightened of them."

"We have other reports on Alexander Kulkov which are not so innocent. There can be no doubt that you are becoming slack."

"I report what occurs, Comrade Makeev."

He leaned suddenly across his desk and snarled at me like an angry dog.

"That is not enough. You are too passive. You wait for things to occur. We have no room for fools here. You must *make* things occur, *make* them occur, do you understand?"

"Yes, Comrade Makeev," I said.

"All right, then! Next time you come here don't show me stuff like this. It is not what you are wanted for and it is not what you were released from Butirki for."

I left the room with my stomach in my throat and anger in my heart. I walked through the dark, still streets and I thought, "So I'm being cross-watched!" Suppose I did manage to provoke something actively anti-revolutionary? Why,

hell! I would have to lead the thing myself. Lead it and report it at the same time. And then when the arrests were made who would guarantee that I would not be arrested along with the others and done away with? That would be most logical, in fact, because I could scarcely get away with an action of that sort without losing my cover as an agent if they did not arrest me along with the others. It would be quite a joke and Makeev would laugh like the devil.

From then on I worked with apprehension as my shadow.

Meanwhile I had finished the course at the anti-aircraft school and had been nominated instructor at the same school with the rank of sergeant. Because of my work I scarcely ever saw my mother or my two brothers, even though we all still continued to live in the same room. I arrived home at night when all the others were already asleep, and I got up in the mornings before the others did. But I know that they were all well and much better fed and clothed and my mother seemed to be losing her fear about where I was getting my money from. She began to respect me as a hard and dedicated worker for the family, but we were not close. It was Valentin to whom Mother confided her worries, it was Valentin she thought of as her favorite son, and him she kissed tenderly whenever occasion offered. All this was as it should be. It not only gave me greater freedom from explanations, which were now no longer required of me in fact, but it was fair to Valentin who was a mild-mannered, highly sensitive boy. He was quiet and reserved out of timidity, not out of caution, and I felt protective towards him almost as much as I did towards little Volodia who had learned to regard me almost as his father. But it seemed to me that Valentin had lately become wary of me. The more he and mother became attached to one another, the less he and I seemed to have in common.

One Sunday morning, when there were no classes at the school, I lay in bed later than usual and Mother had gone to the communal kitchen to make tea for our breakfast. Valentin also lay in his bed (Volodia slept in the same bed as my mother).

"Valya," I said, "things have become a lot easier for us, haven't they?"

"Thanks to you, Tolya," said Valentin.

"It is a pity we never seem to have anything to say to each other any more nowadays."

"You mean you and me, Tolya?" asked Valentin. "But I am sure we do, only we never see each other. You are always busy, even at night when I am home from work. How can we talk?"

"What does Mother think of me, Valya?" I asked.

"She is very grateful to you, Tolya," he answered, after a tiny hesitation. Then he looked round at me and said, "And she is a little afraid for you."

"She must not be afraid, Valya. Tell her that. I must rely on you to make her feel easy as she used to in the old days. She does not trust me as she does you."

I left it at that, and so did he.

One arrest. One congratulation. A man who two years before had had no idea of the value of money and who had since become a chauffeur for a factory director, had been out in the country and had taken some of the petrol from the tank of his car. He had traded it for some eggs with a *kolkhoz* worker. That was not important. It was the petrol. The charge was sabotage, and there were hopes that mention might soon be made of an organized ring.

"You improve," said Makeev. "But slowly. How about Igor Peters?"

I had not progressed far with Igor, but there had been progress, all of which had been duly reported. This is what had happened.

I looked him up one evening at the Hotel Metropole, a place where many foreign diplomats and Soviet officials of the Commissariats of the Exterior live. A very pleasant place. An elevator whisked me up to the second floor and I walked along a blue-carpeted corridor to room number 35. Igor's well-remembered voice shouted "Come in!" to my knock and I opened the door.

"Why, Tolya!" he exclaimed, rising from an easy chair where he had been lounging. "What a pleasant surprise! Come in, come in."

I took his hand and said I hoped my visit was not inconvenient.

"Not at all, not at all. You must come and meet my wife."

"Your wife? Then I must congratulate you, too. Just imagine, an auspicious thing like this happens and I don't even hear about it."

He laughed. He had changed in the year since I had last seen him. He was only eighteen years old, but he was very assured in his manner. He had grown taller and a little thinner and his black hair was brushed back very neatly.

He closed the door after me as I came in, and shouted to his wife in the next room.

"Helena! Come as soon as you can. An old friend has called to see us." Then he smiled at me and said, "I think you'll like each other. She is a wonderful girl."

We were no sooner seated than we had to stand up again as Helena, tall and auburn-haired, came in smiling. She was a woman of at least thirty years of age and gave the immediate impression of being someone who spent hours each day before the mirror, adept in all the esoteric claptrap of creams, lotions and massages. We were introduced and she sat next to Igor who threw his arm round her shoulders.

"Don't you think she's wonderful?" Igor asked me as he looked at her. She puckered her nose and pretended to pout. I feared for a moment that I would be treated to a little scene of domestic bliss and was beginning to feel uncomfortable. But Igor suddenly stood up and said "Vodka," and would Lenotchka please ring the bell for the room boy. This was better, I thought, and told Igor that if I had congratulated him before because of his getting married, now I could congratulate him again because of the wife he had been lucky enough to find.

"Lucky is right," he said. When he returned with three glasses on a little tray we each took a glass and he proposed a toast.

"To the dead past and a bright future!"

I drank the toast and laughed.

"Do you really want the past to be so dead?" I asked. "Surely we can all remember the pleasant times. I for one don't want to forget those parties in your house."

Igor turned to me seriously.

"That, perhaps. But nothing else. Lenotchka, too, has

nothing to make her love the past. Her first husband was a beast. As for me, ever since my father showed himself to be the scoundrel he was I have had a hard time to save myself from utter ruin. You cannot imagine what a help Lenotchka has been to me. No, Tolya. For us it is the future."

"And for Tolya, too," said Helena.

The room boy knocked and came in with dishes of cold herring, sausage and pickles.

"Thank you." I smiled at Helena, and Igor filled the glasses again. "But I know Igor very well. I have many times enjoyed his hospitality in the old days, and therefore his father's, too. So I am a little surprised to hear him call his father a scoundrel. I don't think he means it. In fact, I almost laughed when he said it."

"No, Tolya. I mean it, all right. There can be no doubt of it now."

"My father got ten years of labor deprived of rights," I said. "Have you been able to discover what happened to yours?"

Igor looked at me steadily for a few seconds.

"Tolya," he said slowly, "I neither know nor care what happened to him. Nor to my mother. They are enemies. I have neither father nor mother. I would like you to understand that if you wish to continue to give me the pleasure of your friendship you must never mention those people to me again. They owe me nothing and I owe them nothing. If you do not agree with me now, you will in the end."

Helena had been nervous as he spoke, and she broke in now to agree with him and to stroke his head as though he were an old man who had disturbed himself more than was good for his heart.

I drank another glass of vodka and thought that I could not leave it at that.

"You talk like a sick man, Igor," I said. "What did your father or mother ever do to you that you should despise them? Why should you talk of them in this way simply because of something other people say they did? You know nothing about it. If you can turn on them so easily then you can turn on others just as easily."

"What the devil do you mean?" shouted Igor, almost livid with anger and knowing perfectly well what I meant. But I was remorseless.

"I mean, my friend, that if what you have just said is

true and that you have really denied your father and mother, then what sort of faith can I have in you as a friend if I should some day be accused of something? Or even your wife, for that matter?"

Igor jumped up and, before his wife could stop him, struck me with his fist on the mouth.

My lip was cut, but with a great effort I remained seated and did not strike him back, though I was stronger than he. If I struck him I would spoil my approach for ever, but if I could stay on I might yet have him. I put my head in my hands.

"I am sorry, Igor," I muttered. "You must forgive me. I cannot drink as I used to, it seems. Helena, please, you too forget the stupid thing I have just said. Igor is a fine fellow."

"Forget it, Tolya," said Igor with a smile, possibly a little pleased at this show of manly vigor in front of his wife. "Have another drink and get into a better mood."

"I will, Igor," I said.

We talked sporadically and then Igor asked me what I thought about the war.

"Do you think the Germans will attack us?" he asked.

"What? And maintain a war on two fronts? I don't think so. In any event, they are gaining from the trade agreement. It is our fats, butter and wheat that feed them."

"Maybe, Tolya, but have you thought—the Germans were only yesterday our worst fascist enemies. Today they are our allies. Who knows if we are not feeding a people that will tomorrow be in arms against us? If you ask me, that trade agreement was a mistake."

"I see what you mean," I said, smiling inwardly. "We make them stronger so that they can attack us later."

"I am not saying they will, mind you. But I think it is quite likely and, that being so, we could use the foodstuffs domestically to more advantage ourselves."

I now had something to report, I thought. Let me remain friendly with these two and someday Igor would regret his attitude regarding his parents and that smack on the mouth.

I did not stay long after that, but received an open invitation to come and see them whenever I liked. That was enough.

SIX

ALEXANDER KULKOV

I HAD not finished with Alexander Kulkov either, though in his case I had no personal incentive to success. Just the duty of it. And after a while, through repeated visits and meetings during which I refrained from mentioning anything remotely political, I managed to by-pass Alexander's show of cautious orthodoxy in these matters. One night we sat in his ill-lit room and drank vodka. Alexander was depressed. He looked around him with disgust on his face and made the motion of spitting. We had our overcoats on because it was very cold already and there was no fire.

"A dog's life," said Alexander.

"Be calm, Alexander," came his mother's voice from the other side of a clapboard partition; "don't get yourself worked up again."

"I would like to have your patience, Mother," muttered Alexander. "But please don't teach me your resignation."

Then he turned to me, his eyes small from the vapor of vodka and the cigarette smoke that polluted the air in his unventilated room.

"Did I ever tell you what my father was before the Revolution?"

"He was a cobbler, wasn't he?" I asked.

"A cobbler, yes. A simple little worker in a little shop, with a light hammer, a few pounds of nails, a last and a sharp knife. He worked with his hands from morning to night. It was after the Revolution that he became powerful; and although it is said that power corrupts, communism was everything to him. How the hell could he be seriously thought of as an enemy of the people?"

"You don't think he was, then?"

"Do you think your father was?"

"No," I said. "I don't."

He filled the glasses with vodka again.

"You know what?" he said. "I think we are the most unfortunate people on earth, and we are two hundred million strong. And ten beggars on horseback are leading us to hell. You can cut my head off but I am right."

He looked at me menacingly as if daring me to try and cut his head off there and then.

"You can cut my head off, too, my friend," I said, "because I agree with you. But such talk is dangerous."

"Ach! Who cares! You're not an NKVD spy, are you?"

"Of course not," I said, with well-simulated anger.

"I believe you, Tolya. But remember—there must be thousands of them. Thousands of the dirty bastards. They are the people who have prevented communism functioning as it should."

He leaned across the little table and said to me in a whisper, so that his mother should not hear:

"If I thought you were one of them, even though you are my friend, Tolya, I swear I would cut your throat and feed your flesh to the dogs in the street."

"You are bloodthirsty tonight, Alexander," I laughed.

"Just a little drunk, that's all," he said more calmly.

I left him soon after and went to bed. It was when I was writing out my report next day that the conversation, forced back into my memory, made its real impression. I realized suddenly that I had not even been angry when he had unwittingly called me a dirty bastard. My mind had been fully occupied with the task of recording his conversation and taking care to reply in such a way as would not seem unnatural and would not discourage him from continuing. That is the quality of steel, I thought with pleasure. That is self-mastery and perfect self-subordination to a predetermined objective. Power over others begins with power over oneself. Good.

But later, when there was no need for me to exercise that now instinctive self-control, I remembered what he had said about the informers and spies being responsible for not permitting communism to function properly, for even I could see and had seen that even then, after twenty-three years, our people were poor, as poor as, if not poorer than, they had always been. Of course this could not be the informers' fault, I thought; but yet, indirectly, there might be something in it.

I remembered a talk I had had with State Security Cap-

tain Sergei Litkins, the man who had prevented my being beaten in the interrogation room in jail once, and who was now chief of our Fifth Section and directly under the command of Commissar Fedotov. Litkins was a cultured and polished young man of not yet thirty and he had a thorough grounding in the most varied subjects. It was a great pleasure to listen to him.

He was talking to me about "passive elements," and he spoke in his usual precise, modulated and persuasive voice.

"They are the ones," he said, "who are always there ready to support the insurgent, the rebel who looks like being successful and the powerful invader. They are not individually active in opposition to the régime, but they are the hidden army that will fall in among the ranks of our enemies, and therefore they must not be allowed to survive. They must all be recognized and known to us; that is part of the job. But that is not sufficient in itself for conclusive action on our part, for we want no more panics like there were under Yezhov. The next step, therefore, is to provide some sort of public proof of anti-revolutionary tendencies. These people must be encouraged to express insidious opinions without a group. Then they can be charged with, and convicted of, promoting dissatisfaction and political unrest with a view to instigating revolt."

Very specious and very instructive, but just think of the work involved. I will explain what I mean.

I was just beginning to understand how widely the NKVD had extended its tentacles among the people of the Soviet Union. There were spies everywhere in industry, agriculture, distribution, communications, the forces and the government itself. Imagine the situation of the common people. Almost without exception every worker is underpaid by any standard west of the Soviet Union as I now know. You can think of it in terms of more or less misery, more or less relief from cold, hunger and want. But it is not only that. What can Ivan the worker do to improve his condition? He cannot ask for an increase in wages because his claim is no greater than the next man's and because such a request can so easily be interpreted as a reflection on the régime. He cannot change his job to a better one at will because he is needed and the factory will not let him go. Poor fellow, he is an ordinary man with no exceptional skill or talent. He must live by the use of his hands in routine work. He is

dissatisfied and afraid to show it. He becomes taciturn and his emotions find no outlet, because dissatisfaction is so frequently dangerous and criminal. He either becomes resigned or else a little desperate, a little unbalanced. He can think of practically nothing except how poor and miserable he is.

Then a strange man in uniform takes him by the arm and leads him to a quiet little room. Ivan is scared to death. His wife, his children? But the stranger does not hurt him. He asks him only to spy on his fellows. And not only that, but if he does well, Ivan may get an extra fifty or a hundred rubles or a bottle of vodka as a premium. "Ach! What a relief! Of course, comrade tchekist, of course. A thousand thanks, comrade tchekist, a thousand thanks."

Could it be that later, much later, he begins to feel that he has sold his soul for a little food? But the souls of men cannot be seen, even under the most powerful microscope. What is this stupid, archaic, superstitious notion of a soul?

There are millions of Ivans. And how many hundreds of millions of rubles? Even though millions are produced by the unpaid labor Ivan helps to get for the concentration camps.

I was reminded of all this by Alexander Kulkov's words.

In the Marxist philosophy any labor that is not productive and of benefit to the community should not exist. Thus in the Soviet Union prostitution is forbidden. Not because it is considered intrinsically immoral, or because some people are worried that it will pollute and degrade the poor women who have fallen to it, but because it is a means of earning a living unproductively. Another instance. A writer is useful only in proportion to the propaganda value of his work; the subtler and more indirect his propaganda the greater his merit as a writer and the greater his entitlement to his stipend and privileges. But when the people do not need propaganda any more, if that should ever be possible, there will be no writers in the Soviet Union. Or let us say, when they need less propaganda, there will be less writers. When an addict is cured of his habit and casts the opium from him, he does not care to tend the poppy.

But it seemed for a moment to me then, and more to me now, that this idea of the supreme worthiness of utilitarian productiveness had gone to such lengths that it had recoiled upon itself, like a tickled scorpion, and bitten its own

head. For, especially in the lower echelons, a counter espionage agent is judged by his production, and this production is taken to mean the number of people he can successfully incriminate. Not the accuracy of his investigation, but the number of them.

So we pay a man to watch his fellows, when several whom he watches are being paid to watch him. And the concrete result of this, while it may mean a slight stepping up of general routine productivity, is an eventual diminution of the labor force at the disposal of the nation. It is anti-economic and, in effect, anti-Marxist.

I have since seen how government works elsewhere, and I have been able to see in workers of other lands a phenomenon called civic sense. In the Soviet Union those whose actions seem to denote an exaggerated parody of civic sense are being paid for what they do.

SEVEN

THE DAY OF THE PANIC

I HAD been a counter-espionage agent for about one year when a funny thing occurred. I was with Makeev in one of the apartments used for our meetings. We were discussing the difficulties I encountered in getting the people to commit themselves in public and he was giving me advice and instructions for future operations when he broke off and said:

"By the way, leave Igor Peters alone from now on."

I was amazed. The interest hitherto shown in my cultivation of Igor had always been most emphatic.

"Why, Comrade Makeev?" I asked. "Is he not ripe yet, or have you someone else on him?"

Makeev looked slightly peeved.

"No," he said, "nothing like that. The situation has changed. He is one of our men now, that's all."

I could scarcely repress a laugh.

"One of our men?"

"Yes. He is one of the informers on the staff and inhabitants of the Metropole Hotel."

I could see it was a painful subject for Makeev to dwell on, but I felt I knew him well enough to say just one thing.

"Maybe later on, Comrade Makeev," I said. His eyes flickered and he half smiled.

"Perhaps," he murmured.

Stupid, lucky Igor, I thought.

While all this was going on I had again had a change of post in my cover duties. I had become First Operations Assistant of anti-aircraft defense of the fifteenth area of the Oktiabrysky District of Moscow. Then a man called Stepanov took Makeev's place as my chief. I liked him as I had never liked Makeev, though liking and not liking did not make much difference any more to the way I reacted to people who were my superiors in rank and power.

One day Stepanov called me to come to meet him at a certain address, and I went.

He had a bottle of vodka and two glasses ready on a center table. He shook my hand and we sat in armchairs opposite each other. It was Sunday, June 22, 1941.

Stepanov said nothing at all, but turned on the radio and listened to the music that lasted a few minutes until the stroke of noon. Then Molotov's soft, insinuating voice came over the air and I heard for the first time that German troops had advanced into Soviet territory and that we were at war with Germany.

Stepanov filled the glasses and we drank a toast to victory over the invaders.

"Did you know that I was a flier?" asked Stepanov.

"No, comrade."

"Well, I am. And I am going to the front to fly again. You will await your orders and carry on normally meanwhile."

I filled the glasses again.

"I wish you many kills, Comrade Stepanov," I said, "and a glorious return."

We drank.

A few weeks later Stepanov was dead.

The effect of the news of war on the population of Moscow was instantaneous and widespread. People of all classes started queueing up for foodstuffs all over town, buying to the limits of their purses, and depleting the market in a few hours. Military patrols appeared on the streets to enforce civil defense measures and see that all windows were immediately blacked out.

Next day there was a rush on the State deposit boxes, but all deposits had been frozen overnight and no one could withdraw his money, whatever his need. All private deposits had, by fiat, been automatically loaned to the government. Nearly all available means of transport were suddenly commandeered for military use, so that people who had thought it prudent to go out into the country to collect and lay in a stock of firewood for the winter had to wheel their cargoes home in wheelbarrows and perambulators or carry the logs on their backs.

Conscription was speeded up incredibly and the streets seemed daily more bereft of men in civilian clothes, while

railroad stations were forever full of recruits in newly issued uniforms. Mock air raids were held to judge the temper of the people, and their panic appalled me. Repetitions saw improvement, however.

One afternoon, while I was at the fifteenth area headquarters, a soldier came running downstairs into our basement office and told me that my commander, Lieutenant Rozen, had had an accident. He had indeed. He had been driving the area car about the courtyard trying to prove to a girl friend that he knew how to drive and had backed hard right into her, crushing one of her legs against a wall. When I arrived she was unconscious and Rozen stood paralyzed and white-faced beside her.

We sent her in the car to hospital and Rozen descended with me to report the incident to Captain Dudorev, the district commander. He had barely reported when he handed the phone to me and I heard Dudorev's voice over the wire.

"You are acting officer in command of the fifteenth area as from today. Arrest Lieutenant Rozen and forward him under escort to District Headquarters."

Next day MPVO daily orders confirmed my appointment and disclosed Rozen's fate: he had been stripped of his rank and was being sent to a penal battalion at the front.

Thus I was already a lieutenant of the MPVO and area commander when the bombing of Moscow began. I had already been living at area headquarters for some time and, after the first air raid, I went home to see how Mother was. All the few glass windows in the house had been blown in.

When I arrived Mother was patching the window to her room with cardboard. She turned round as I came in but did not smile.

"You are not hurt, Tolya?" she asked.

"No, Mother. And you?"

"Volodia and I are all right. Only frightened; the noise was so terrible. But Valentin has not come home yet."

"It is still early for him. The factory must be back at work. Don't worry."

She sat down on one of the beds with her hands clasped in her lap.

"Tolya, my son, what is happening?" she asked. "Do you know what people are saying? They say that the Germans are not far off and will soon be in Moscow."

"There are lots of fools who cannot keep their tongues

still in their heads, Mother. The Germans will never come to Moscow, except to bomb it with their aircraft. It will be dangerous, of course, but it does not mean defeat. There is an order that has just come out to evacuate all children under eight and their mothers to places east of the city. I think it would be good if you and Volodia were to go."

"But what about Valentin?"

"Valentin is a man now, Mother. He cannot go with you, and he would be the last to let that stop you from going. I am sure he would wish to see you in a safe place."

Valentin came in then and I asked him how he felt about the matter, although I was determined to carry it through even if he disagreed. But he agreed, of course, and joined me in making the arrangements and helping mother to pack her belongings to catch the first train due to leave the following day.

Mother and Volodia left Moscow the next day and a friend of mine saw them safely on to the train, helping to make them as comfortable as possible in the cattle wagon to which they were allotted. Valentin could not leave the factory to see them off and I could not leave my duties in the fifteenth area.

My brother Valentin continued to live alone in the room that Mother and Volodia had vacated and, in the absence of the others, we became very close, closer than we had ever been before. We could not see much of each other, but we were both happy in a new-found friendship which came as near to commanding full confidence as I could allow myself.

I was extremely busy in those days. Every day I had to patrol my area, examine bomb damage, confer with factory directors about precautionary methods, see that proper measures were taken to ensure shelter for workers in the raids that would come within the next few hours and generally see that things were in a state of preparedness. Even so, the NKVD did not permit me to let up on my main work as an agent. I lived very near to physical exhaustion.

I remember being awakened by an orderly at six o'clock in the morning of October 16, 1941, and tuning in on the radio. I always used to listen to the daily news bulletin. It began, on that day as always, with the "Internationale," and then came the announcement that Red troops, after prolonged fighting, had abandoned Mozhaisk, some sixty-

five miles west of Moscow. I already knew that this was not the truth and that Mozhaïsk had been taken by the Germans several days before. But the announcement meant that there was no further faith in the success of attempted counter-attacks by Red troops. I got up and went out.

The city was waking to another day and women were already hurrying to join the queues at the food shops. There was the intermittent sound of gunfire and ack-ack and the drone of aircraft. I saw a clumsy, square-winged Junkers bomber overhead. No one paid much attention to it. I walked back to headquarters to start work.

I was just starting to write my report on what had occurred the previous day when the phone rang. It was Dudorev, commander of the district.

"Lieutenant," he said sharply, "go immediately to the Dmitrovsky and Leningrad roads and verify if German tanks are advancing toward Moscow."

Was the comrade captain crazy? I shrugged my shoulders and drove out to see what it was all about. Where the hell are the infantry, I thought; they are the ones who have to be concerned about tanks advancing. But I saw nothing. I went further than had been requested and scanned the distance with my field glasses but saw nothing. Returning, I reported this to Dudorev.

"I knew it," he muttered over the phone. "These rumors have been started by fifth columnists. Is everything all right in your area?"

"Normal and under control," I answered confidently. But I should not have been so sure.

By eight o'clock that morning the entire life of the city was disrupted. What had happened? No one said, and no one really knew. It was soon clear to those who kept calm, few as they were, however, for we found out that earlier in the morning the flight had been started by party officials, factory managers and people of position in general. Safes had been torn open and money removed. Stocks of foodstuffs had been bundled into official cars and whole families of the privileged had fled the city.

By midday the situation in the fifteenth area was chaotic. None of the organized services were working, workers had no money and foodstuffs were being carted away wholesale by depot and store managers.

Where was the NKVD to stop all this, I wondered. I found it was as leaderless as the other organizations.

At around three in the afternoon we saw the first Red Army deserters in the streets of Moscow. A great many of them had managed to change their uniforms for rough civilian get-ups, and they were joining the long refugee columns. No move was made to stop them. Many of them, it was found, were political instructors and battalion commissars, the very last people who should have been found running away. To me this was a revelation of terrific importance.

As the day wore on we became more and more surprised and unsettled to see that the Germans were not advancing. Why did they not take Moscow that day? The answer is that their intelligence service was not informed of the panic.

At six o'clock in the evening comrade Alexander Sergeyevich Shcherbakov, secretary of the municipal and regional committees of the Communist Party and chief of the Main Political Section of the Red Army, spoke to the people over the radio.

He ordered that the panic should cease immediately and that everyone return to his post. Rumormongers, he said, would be shot without trial. There was no reason for fear, he said. The defense of Moscow, with the Germans twenty-five miles away, was in the hands of General Zhukov, with the rearguard under Lieutenant-General Artemiev.

It all came too late, or rather, the speech need never have been given. The leaders of all civic and military organizations were already far away from Moscow, and hundreds of thousands of the common people, faced with the complete inadequacy of the transport system and the rigors of a long journey on foot, had already returned and were prepared to share whatever fate lay in store for the city where they lived. The panic was over, but those who should have prevented it were still absent.

But while it was still on there had been a hasty, ill-planned and ineffectual attempt on the part of the garrison of NKVD troops stationed at the eastern limits of the city to put a stop to it. No doubt, if it did not stop the exodus of about half a million people who managed to escape, at least it constituted an added inconvenience to the rest. The troops were ordered to turn the people back and, if not obeyed, to shoot the foremost. They shot, and many were killed and

wounded, but they were not obeyed and, in more than one place, the panic they were trying to stop, by its dogged persistence, communicated itself to them and they joined the column.

EIGHT

SHURA RUDENKO

VALENTIN CAME to see me at area headquarters next day. He said he was going into the army.

"But, Valya," I said, "you are exempt from military service as long as they need you in the factory."

"I know, but I'm going to volunteer."

"Think what you are doing, Valentin."

"I have thought enough, and I am sure this is the best way open to me to wash away the stain on our name. If I fight in the field as a volunteer no one will call me son of an enemy any more."

Valentin left Moscow that night for training in anti-tank artillery in the Kazakh Republic. I heard from him sporadically at first and then nothing for a long time. The letter that finally arrived told me that he had been wounded by machine-gun fire and was in hospital.

One night, when the Germans were no farther than eight miles from Moscow, in a little village called Chornye Griazi, and the city was under aerial bombardment, I was patrolling my area in a car, the lights dimmed down and hooded. There were two soldiers with me, one driving the car. Suddenly there was a flash of light a hundred yards down the road. Before ducking my head down I caught a glimpse of another car further ahead with the door open and a young woman just getting in. The explosion came, with that noise that beats on the walls of the stomach, followed by shock waves that made the car quiver. I heard the sound of falling masonry and got out of the car and ran forward without thinking. It was dark again and I wanted to find out what had happened to the young woman in front. I tripped over broken masonry and had to step carefully but I found the car half slewed round and practically buried in

rubble. I called inside, "Are you hurt?" and received no answer.

"Comrades," I shouted to the two soldiers with me. "Come and give me a hand. Look sharp!" I remember I was unnaturally excited.

The men lumbered up and we began to work with our hands in the dark, lifting the rubble from the doorways and roof of the car and throwing it onto the pavement. I wrenched open the door of the car and reached inside with my hands. First I felt the bloody head of the man at the wheel—one of the official drivers. He was dead. Then I felt the warm softness of the young woman lying along the front seat. I felt for her pulse and saw that it was going strong, then she moved.

"Are you all right?" I asked.

"I have a pain in my head," she said, putting her hands to it.

"Let me help you out, then, and I will drive you to the hospital."

"I don't need that," she laughed. "And besides, I have work to do."

"Where are you going?"

"I have to meet someone at the Yaroslavsky Station."

"I will drive you there and we can have a glass of tea."

I helped her out and she leaned on me a little as I took her to my car. Inside the station canteen we sat down opposite each other and drank tea. I then saw her clearly for the first time. She was lovely, so lovely I became almost tongue-tied. Her hair was jet black as were her eyes. She was slim and tall and her skin was of a startling freshness and whiteness for which there is no simile. But there was a quality in her look which I had never seen before as far as I could recall. In those days I would have called it a calm fearlessness. Now I think I would call it nobility.

"Thank you," she said, "for saving me from a terrible death and for this glass of tea." There was a twinkle of laughter in her eyes.

"How is the bump on your head?"

"The bump is there but the pain is gone."

"My name is Tolya Granovsky, what is yours?"

"Shura," she said.

"Shura. It is a friendly name. What is the other name?"

"Just Shura," she said, and stood up suddenly with a laugh.

I stood up, too, and took her hand, but with little confidence.

"You are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen," I said, a little hoarsely. "I must see you again soon."

"Tomorrow, outside the Bolshoi Theater at seven in the evening," she said.

"Fine," I said. "But just in case anything goes wrong this is my telephone number," and I wrote it down for her on a scrap of paper.

She left me then and walked away down the platform.

All night and during the next day it was practically impossible for me to think of anything else but her. I wanted her terribly. I wanted to see her again, be with her, and reassure myself of her extraordinary beauty. I wanted her but was scared to try too hard in case I frightened and repelled her. And, strangest of all, there was a little fear at the back of my mind. Although I repressed it, there was definitely a fear that I was paying for this, paying for it with a commensurate loss in self-mastery. I was no longer quite myself, and it would have been a relief to me if I had found her to be quite ordinary after all. I wished later that she had disappointed me, but unfortunately she did not. She seemed to become lovelier every time I saw her.

She was nineteen years old, a year younger than myself. We became very close to one another. We met whenever we could. There was no time for much; our meetings were hasty and sometimes in odd places. Finally we became lovers. There was never, in those days, any talk of marriage between us. The times were not right for making plans. But we made love wherever we could find a place where we would not be disturbed, and we enjoyed each other a little like brave men condemned to die enjoying a last feast. And we had no surfeit of each other.

We talked about everything to each other, or nearly everything.

I never told her that I belonged to the NKVD. I do not think that, at that stage of the most complete intimacy I have ever known, it was any fear I had that she would betray me to others, but it was because, for the first time, I felt that I would be admitting to something almost shame-

ful. At least, I felt sure that she would regard it as something shameful.

I never suspected anything when one day, as I was giving in a routine report to comrade Captain Sverdlov, my new chief in the NKVD (and son of the famous Jakov Sverdlov, first president of the U.S.S.R. after the Revolution), he handed me a sheaf of typewritten papers. I did not like the man and he had an annoying, conceited air, and the braying laugh of one who is not too sure of himself. It was to this braying laugh that he treated me now.

"Read this, young Shishkin," he commanded. "It will do you good."

I read, and as I gradually realized what I was reading I felt as though the hair was standing up on the back of my neck. It was a very complete report on me and it could only have been written by Shura. When I got to the end I was relieved to see that there was nothing incriminating in it.

"Very interesting," I said, putting the report back on Sverdlov's desk. "And extremely well set out."

"It gave you a start, didn't it?" Sverdlov asked with a loud guffaw. "That will teach you that you can never afford to become slack and overconfident."

I should have laughed with him at the joke he had had at my expense, but I could not. Shura, little darling Shura, a woman agent of the NKVD.

"May I carry on seeing her?" I asked.

"Certainly," he said, with an expansive gesture. "Carry on while you can."

When I had left Sverdlov I thought to myself whether it would not be less painful if I simply stopped seeing Shura. I had been a fool and this was my just punishment—betrayal. At least, I felt it was betrayal. I had arranged to meet Shura that same night. Surely it would be best for me if I simply failed to turn up? Then I realized that that would be a very stupid mistake. Even if I hated her now, which I did not—I was just disillusioned, not even angry—I could not afford to abandon her. Sverdlov would be informed that I had not met her and he would connect it with the report. So, Granovsky resents being watched, he likes to have secrets, does he? Conclusion? Granovsky—Shishkin is unreliable. To be unreliable in the NKVD is like being put on a tightrope without a balancing pole. No, I must act as normally as ever.

I met her that evening. We kissed, we laughed, we walked hand in hand and we made love, and the magic of her crept over me again. I tried to dominate it and suffocate it, but the effort tired me and seemed somehow futile and the object purposeless.

I lit a cigarette and wondered how I could broach the subject to her, for I had begun to feel that I must. It would be impossible to carry on normally without doing so.

"Shura," I said, "you never told me you were an agent of the NKVD." She said nothing for a minute and then she laughed.

"You never told me you were one," she said.

"How do you know I am?" I asked.

"If you know that I am an agent, then you must be one yourself. If not you could not possibly find out."

I was impressed by her accurate reasoning and the way she had not allowed herself to be flustered.

"But why did you report on me, Shura? I never even thought of reporting on you."

"I have to give the names of all the people I meet, and when I gave yours I was told to keep up the contact and submit periodical reports."

"So all this," I said, meaning her and me together as we were, "is just for the NKVD?"

She gave me a warm kiss.

"This is for us," she whispered. "The empty words on paper are for the NKVD."

"And if I had not been so harmless?"

"If, if, if! If I had been born a bear you would have to make love to me in armour plating!"

NINE

THE VISOKOVO ACK-ACK

ONE DAY soon afterwards I went to meet her and waited over two hours for her. She did not come and I could wait no longer. I tried to get in touch with her next day at the telephone number she had given me but was told that there was no one there by that name. I did not try any more. The fire is out and the shadows dance no longer on the wall, I thought. It belongs to the past, a pleasant but unimportant incident, better forgotten. But I could not forget too soon. I brooded for weeks.

Then I was posted, and received the news with relief. I was sick of Moscow for a while and needed a change. I was put in charge of the ack-ack units in Visokovo, which had been retaken from the Germans, and was immediately concerned in a business that made me forget Shura, or almost forget her.

The Visokovo ack-ack units had lost a lot of their men to other more hazardous services and had recruited in their stead some five hundred women, all young and many attractive. My predecessor, a Lieutenant Gradov, had already left and I was met by the secretary of the Party Regional Committee, Comrade Puzanov. An orderly took charge of my gear and Puzanov drove me to his billet where we ate and drank in excellent style. He seemed a jovial fellow, but I was wary of his favors and hospitality as there is usually a reason for these things.

"This is not a bad station, Comrade Granovsky," he said. "I have known many far worse. And then if people like you and I get on well that helps a lot. Lieutenant Gradov and I were firm comrades. We had many good times together, many good times. But there is no reason why we cannot continue, you and I."

"I am sure you are right," I said, though I confess I was a little anxious to find out what he was getting at. "But I

would have thought it difficult to find much amusement in a little town like this."

"Not on your life, man. We have it right here. What are the best ingredients for an entertaining evening? Vodka and women. The vodka is plentiful enough for us and as for women, why, you already know there are five hundred of them under your command. Why," he exclaimed with a laugh, "we can have almost as many concubines as Don Juan, the old rascal."

"Fine," I laughed. "Let's go out now, then, and see if we can pick up a couple of girls to round off the evening."

"Go out, comrade?" said Puzanov with mock astonishment. "Go out? We don't need to go out. Things are organized here." He stood up and waddled to the door of the room. "Piotr, you lazy son of a bitch," he called to his orderly, "bring those soldiers in and hurry up about it."

Puzanov waddled back, lit a cigarette and sat down beside me. Soon the orderly came in leading half a dozen "soldiers" who ranged themselves in line with their backs to the wall in front of us. The orderly went out of the room. I looked them over carefully and noticed that they were all pretty, but whereas two were perfectly at their ease and were even smiling slightly in a manner which seemed distinctly suggestive, the others were at pains to conceal the fact that they were ill at ease.

"Take your pick," invited Puzanov, with a wide wave of his hand, "and do not restrict your choice to one if you feel like more."

"I am no Don Juan," I laughed. "One will be enough. You!" I said, pointing at a pleasant-faced, fair-haired girl who could not keep the anxiety out of her eyes. "What is your name?"

"Olga, Comrade Lieutenant," she said in a voice that was none too steady.

"Come for a walk with me, Olga," I said, standing up.

But here Puzanov held me by the arm. He seemed curiously upset.

"Why are you going out? You can't break up the party now!"

"Just to get acquainted with her, then we will come back."

"All right," he allowed, grudgingly. "But mind you come back."

We walked side by side along a muddy road for a few yards and I started to interrogate her.

"Make sure you answer truthfully to the questions I ask you, Olga, or it will be very bad for you."

"Of course, Comrade Lieutenant, of course I will tell the truth," she almost whispered.

"How many times have you been to one of these parties?"

"This is the first time, Comrade Lieutenant."

"But you had heard of them before?"

"We all of us know about them, even I who had only been here a few weeks."

"Do the girls like the parties?"

She hesitated and shook her head about as though she wished she did not have to answer that question.

"Olga," I said slowly, "I will not hurt you if you tell the truth, but do not try to hide anything."

"A few girls like them, Comrade Lieutenant, like those who used to go with the Germans. Most hate them, but then who can refuse?"

"Why?"

"Well, I refused the first time, Comrade Lieutenant, and so I was put on fatigue from morning till night. It was arranged that I should be late for my meals so I got no food. This time I have agreed, so tomorrow I shall have a pass to go and visit my family for a couple of days. It is easier to accept these things."

"Let us go back," I said.

She touched my arm.

"Comrade Lieutenant," she said, "they say you are the new commanding officer here. I hope you will change this, but please do not tell Comrade Puzanov that I told you all these things."

Puzanov's orderly was on guard outside the door of his room, but when he saw us he opened the door and let us in without a word. Puzanov greeted me with fervor, like someone who has waited impatiently for a partner without whom he cannot start a game. He was stripped to the waist and the fat on his stomach rolled over his trousers belt like the lip of some monstrous animal. Only two girls, apart from Olga, now remained and both were completely naked and stood a little awkwardly behind him with their backs to a roaring fire.

"Come on, comrade," Puzanov shouted. "Your vodka is

already poured and the bottle stands beside the glass. Tell your girl to undress herself like a good citizen, ha-ha-ha!"

I drank my vodka and wondered what I should do. It would be quite easy to get into the spirit of the thing and Olga was already undressing although I had said nothing to her. Suddenly I made up my mind.

"Put your clothes on again, Olga," I said. "I didn't tell you to undress."

"What's the matter?" asked Puzanov. "Surely you are not frightened of . . ."

"I want my woman, Comrade Puzanov," I said almost angrily, "and I want her alone. Please excuse us and we will leave you now."

He ran around the table and took me by the arm, looked earnestly into my face and spoke in a low voice.

"My friend, it is better together like this, I assure you it is. There is no comparison. And my girls are not ugly, see for yourself. They will make all the difference."

When I saw that expression of something like entreaty in his eyes, then I knew that Puzanov was a sick man, still hungry for more than he could take and old before his time.

I took Olga by the hand and led her to the door.

"Goodnight, comrade."

He did not answer.

Next morning I held an inspection of the troops under my command, went to the medical officer to inquire on their general state of health, and asked many questions of many under-officers and troops. There were nineteen pregnant women, all noticeably so, but of whom only seven figured on medical records; there were nearly fifty cases of venereal disease; cleanliness of barracks was poor and dress was slovenly. Discipline, in a word, was practically non-existent.

By the same afternoon I had drafted special orders which were posted on the board and battery sergeants made sure everyone read them.

I ordered all pregnant women to report to the medical officer to get temporary discharge papers, all venereal cases to report for daily treatment under guarded confinement, and I stipulated severe penalties for anyone found out of his or her barrack precincts after a certain hour. Sentries outside the women's quarters were instructed to shoot at any-

one trying to get in or out without presenting a special pass stamped and signed by myself.

Mixed feelings greeted my orders. The men, in general, having learned by the example of their superior officer Gradov, were annoyed at being deprived of what some of them felt was already practically a traditional right. And not all the women were pleased, either, some of those who had to get temporary discharge least of all, for that meant that they would have to return to their villages and the privations and hunger that prevailed there. Nonetheless, I remained firm.

Puzanov invited me over to his place again for a few drinks, but of course there were no women there this time. He pretended to be in favor of what I had done and said that a shake-up of this sort every now and then did troops in barracks a lot of good. He took it that the state of affairs was of a transient nature and would be allowed to ease off slowly and return to normal as soon as I felt that my authority had been sufficiently impressed on those under my command.

But, as time went on and things did not ease up, his geniality to me became more and more markedly false, and one day I received an unexpected telephone call from the chief of the regional NKVD section. I went over to see him.

When I was alone with him in his office he said:

"You are Comrade Shiskin, I believe."

I nodded. I saw he had been advised I, too, was an NKVD man.

"I have here a copy of a letter which we intercepted and which I think you will be interested to read. The original has been sent on, of course."

What I read was the copy of a letter from Puzanov to the Moscow PVO headquarters in which he made serious complaints about my conduct, accusing me of abusing my authority as unit commander and tyrannizing over the women under my command. He requested my immediate removal. He signed the letter as Secretary of the Party Regional Committee.

Of course, he did not know that I was of the NKVD organization and therefore never guessed that I would be made aware, and so soon, of the contents of his letter. But even so there was no time to be lost.

Returning to my unit I delegated command to my deputy, and set out for Moscow.

Through the chief of the PVO section of the NKVD, Captain Fyodorov, I went straight to NKVD Commissar Zhuravlev who was, I knew, a friend of Shcherbakov, Secretary of the Moscow Committee of the Party, and gave him full details of the affair.

I went back to my post with the assurances of Zhuravlev that full use would be made of my testimony. A full-scale inquiry was set in motion and, as a result, Puzanov was expelled from the Party.

But I did not remain there long afterwards.

When I heard about it I could not imagine a greater opportunity. I was told that Captain Fyodorov had recommended me to Zhuravlev, who, after due examination of my record and consultation with officers who knew me, approved the appointment.

I was to go on a special course at the secret espionage and sabotage school of the NKVD. Until then I had only heard vaguely of the existence of such an institution, and now I was to go there. I felt like a junior major when he hears he has been picked for staff college.

Great things were in store.

TEN

ESPIONAGE SCHOOL

THE SCHOOL was under the jurisdiction of the Fourth Section, which was preparing for the task of destroying Germany by intensive sabotage and espionage throughout the whole length and breadth of Germany itself and the eastern occupied territories. Commanding this vital unit was Sudoplatov, holding a rank equivalent to Major General in the army. Those who knew him told me that he was vastly experienced in his highly specialized field, mathematically efficient, energetic and powerful with a tremendous memory for detail and a cool, incisive mind.

A fine place had been found to install the school. It was a building dating from Tsarist times but built in a style supposed to be reminiscent of the fifteenth century, like a *Schloss*, and it was located near Bykovo, some forty kilometers from Moscow. It had once belonged to the old Count Vorontsov Dashkov and his family, now dispossessed and vanished. It had three stories of granite and turrets, and patterns in parquet flooring, and murals painted on the walls above the dark paneling. It was on the banks of the river Vereyka, and was surrounded by high walls.

There was a village called Vireya nearby, and it was constantly patrolled by plainclothes NKVD men, not only because of the school, but because of the proximity of the Aerodynamic Institute across the river. The school was officially known as "Military Detachment 113" but no one was allowed to send correspondence from it giving that address. Letters that I might wish to send to Mother or Valentin had to be posted in Moscow and a different return address given.

I took with me a letter from the Fourth Section in Moscow signed by State Security Major Petrov who, although his only ostensible connection with the school was that he used one of the châteaux in the grounds as his summer

residence, was the unofficial but real head of the school. The letter, which I had read, asked for special living conditions for me and that I be given an intensive course on the "Special Program." At the time I had no idea what this meant.

I was at the school for one day with nothing to do but install myself there in a pleasant private room. During that day I found that there were about one hundred students at the school divided up into groups of fourteen or fifteen, each with a commander and radio telegraphist. They were being made familiar with all sorts of small arms, machine-guns, grenades and land mines of both Soviet and German manufacture and receiving training in sabotage in all its forms. I knew, however, from the start that I would not be joining them.

The next day I received instructions to go to Moscow immediately and present myself to Lieutenant Milovzorov at the Fourth Section. I was in the dark, but did what I was told. Milovzorov turned out to be a charming, tall, nervous, dark-haired man of about twenty-seven. He was to be something in the way of a special tutor and personal chief of mine, he said. After meeting each other in the most cordial manner we walked to an apartment on Petroveriksky Street, for which he gave me the key. We entered together and I saw that it was an open, airy place, furnished in the staid convention then fashionable and completely equipped.

"This is yours, comrade," he said, "and you can use it for whatever purpose you like; for study, entertainment or relaxation. Linen will be washed and replaced, the place will be cleaned out and polished, the stock of foodstuffs will be replenished without your having to bother your head about it at all. Take a seat and let us have a miniature housewarming."

He served vodka which we drank together. Meanwhile we talked freely—at least he talked freely—of internal and foreign policies of the Soviet Government. The tone of the conversation more than anything else made me realize that I was no longer a neophyte in the NKVD. I had, in a manner of speaking, graduated. This impression was decidedly confirmed when he told me, by the way, that my basic salary from now on would be 1,500 rubles, with no deductions of any sort whatsoever for food, clothes or lodging. Furthermore, I would now finally have access to

the NKVD stores. He gave me an identity card, or passport, which carried Petrov's signature and commanded all and sundry to render me assistance wherever I might require it.

Immediately after this I started work.

Back in Milovzorov's office, he gave me a sheet of paper on which were typed out five fictitious "situations." He told me I must study them and develop them convincingly which, in NKVD terminology, is known as writing a "legend." The situations were: (1) I am a Red army officer captured in combat by the Germans; (2) I am a wounded soldier, unnoticed by our medical staff, overtaken by the advancing Germans; (3) I am a Red army deserter throwing myself on the mercy of the German front-line troops; (4) I am a Red paratrooper dropped behind the German lines and giving myself up; (5) I am a civilian who presents himself as a refugee to the Germans either through having crossed the frontier or through finding my homeland overrun by them.

Milovzorov called in his assistant, a lieutenant called Krupennikov, whom I followed into another room. There I was shown to a desk on which was a quantity of paper, pens and ink.

"You may sit there and begin, comrade," said Krupennikov, and seated himself at another desk opposite mine.

I realized that what I was required to do with these "situations" was to develop a personal story that would convince the Germans and encourage them to trust me. This was the first time I had done this sort of thing and I knew, almost by instinct, that my legends would later be scrutinized by very intelligent men with a view to getting a picture of my mind. No doubt conclusions would be tentatively arrived at concerning my intelligence, adaptability and my emotional tendencies. It was a difficult business because I had to make the Germans believe either that I had come to them of my own free will or that I was glad to find myself in their hands, that I hated the Soviet régime. Meanwhile, I had in reality been sent to make contact in order to gain freedom of action for espionage purposes. From the legend, which, in effect, would be the story I would tell the Germans, no one must think me insincere in wishing to join them but, on the other hand, I could not forget that my examiners, the NKVD men who

would read the papers I had to write, must not become unduly impressed with the sincerity of my tone to the Germans.

I started to write. Krupennikov, completely bald, with bright, half-closed pig eyes set in a fat face, unobtrusively watched me the whole time. I worked steadily.

At ten o'clock in the night Krupennikov and I went out for a bite of supper and returned immediately. At three next morning I leaned back in my chair and told Krupennikov that I had finished. He took my papers without a word and left the room. Soon I was called in to see Milovzorov.

"I will read these legends in due course," he said. "Meanwhile, you had better get some sleep in your apartment and go back to the school first thing after daybreak. By the way," he added, "make out a list of what food and drink you want in the apartment. It will be stocked up while you are absent. You can leave the list there."

I was glad to get back to the flat, its sturdy utilitarian furniture, the anonymous pictures on the wall of conventional scenes of *troikas* in the snow, an autumn sunrise and, of course, Stalin. But it was not really for these things, nor for the spring mattress on the bed, the carpets on the floors nor the radiators that warmed the rooms that I felt glad to get back. It was because there I had privacy, privacy almost for the first time in my whole life, and I liked it. I had never before realized how important privacy could be to an individual, how much the lack of it can remold him alien to his true self so that, in the end, he may cease to recognize that he is anybody at all.

I had a few hours' sleep and took the train for Bykovo and the school.

After breakfast my course commenced. I was the only pupil and I had either one instructor or two simultaneously. The system of instruction generally followed the principle of getting me to do something and then pick to pieces what I had done, after which I would have to do everything again. A tremendous amount of attention was given to map reading, sketch-map drawing, pathfinding and woodsman-ship. There was practice and theory, practice and theory. Everything I did was most carefully criticized and I had to read the same or similar criticisms until no further criticism was justified. For seven months, three days a week at the

school, I received constant, unremitting training, always followed by scores of tests and retests. All the time I was being sedulously watched, my habits, mannerisms and ways were catalogued so that in the end my examiners must have known me better than I knew myself. Everything about me that they saw, the way I lit a cigarette, the way I moved my hands when they had provoked me to a certain fatigued irritation, the moods that encroached themselves upon me in extreme tiredness, the pitch of my voice and tiny hesitations in answering questions that must not appear to have to be thought about, everything indeed, they commented upon and discussed freely with me. No excuses were tolerated. Inconvenient habits must be removed and proper, reliable, controlled reactions substituted.

Sometimes I became so desperately tired, both physically and mentally, that I would have done almost anything to avoid continuing the course. But then I remembered what they could do with me if I failed the course. I was beginning to learn a lot about the course and its purpose. If I failed it seemed logical enough to presume that they would either tuck me away in some heavily supervised desk job where my knowledge would do no harm and might even be useful for purely administrative purposes, or else they might simply liquidate me. So I carried on with all the energy and purpose I could muster.

During the remaining three days of the working week I had to go to Moscow and work in my apartment there. Solidly, the whole day long, I wrote out legends of my story to the Germans.

"You are being trained," Milovzorov told me, "not merely to penetrate to the German rear, but to be accepted by them and to win their trust. We shall in all likelihood require of you that you join in their political life, become a member of certain organizations and be known as an enemy of our régime. Then you can be of enormous service when the time is ripe."

So I wrote and re-wrote legend after legend. After some two weeks I was told to rewrite from memory the first five legends I had concocted in front of Krupennikov on the first day. The inevitable happened and there were slight differences or omissions which were minutely criticized. Inevitable? To start with, perhaps, but there must be no inevitability about mistakes in the future; there must be an

inevitability of success. Memory must be developed. There is no limit to the possibilities of memory. It must become as reliable as an archive of photographs. Memory, memory, memory, and the mastery of the disciplined mind over the emotions and over the weaknesses of the flesh. There are only two things that must occupy the mind of the true *tchekist*: the objective and the means to attain it. No preconceptions, no absolutes, no principles, no values besides efficiency. The *tchekist* is the perfect servant and guardian of the State. Train, train, train to improve, to achieve perfection, to become a one hundred per cent efficient human machine.

I was given sketch-maps and told to memorize them within a limited space of time. Then they were taken away and later, sometimes twenty-four hours, sometimes a week later, sometimes immediately after vigorous exercise, I was told to reproduce them recognizably. Sometimes, when I least expected it, an instructor would give me a sheet of paper and say:

"Reproduce again the layout of X factory as you saw it and reproduced it last week from drawing 78."

That was a very difficult test. When I thought I had finished with a thing I suddenly found that I had not.

Yet the method was entirely successful. After a very short time I found that my memory responded with an accuracy and dispatch which I would previously have considered incredible.

One evening my instructor and I were walking back across the grounds from the firing-range when we saw six or seven men and women jump out of a truck at the gate. It was difficult at first to distinguish between the men and women because both were muffled to the ears in trench coats and both wore heavy soldiers' boots.

"More students?" I asked idly of the instructor.

"Not exactly. They are a deep penetration sabotage group who work with the partisans. They must have just returned from a sortie for further training and examination of methods."

"You mean they have been here before?"

"They are more or less based here," he said. "At least for the time being."

I looked at them with mild interest as they approached

the building and came nearer to us. Tall, broad, raggedly bearded men and agile, fur-capped women.

Suddenly, as they approached nearer, my breath caught in my throat and I stood still.

"What's the matter?" asked the instructor, eyebrows raised.

I did not answer. But could it be that among those women . . . ? Was it possible that I had actually recognized . . . ? Yes! It was Shura. I was tired as a mule from the day's training but suddenly it seemed as though my chest were bursting with energy that had to be released, like steam. With difficulty I refrained from breaking into a run and going straight over to Shura. I walked on with the instructor, telling him I thought I knew one of the group, and when we drew almost abreast of each other in the dusk I said quite loudly to the instructor:

"Yes, I know one of them and, as far as I remember, her name is Shura Rudenko."

At this Shura turned round and looked at me. She smiled and came towards me with her hand outstretched.

"Comrade Lieutenant," she said with a little laugh, as we were not alone. She was so obviously pleased that I knew nothing had changed between us.

So I had found her again. I had almost begun to reconcile myself to her absence and the memory of the feelings she had excited in me had been repressed and suffocated. Now they all surged back and I realized how much I had allowed her to mean to me. I was no sooner wildly glad at having found her again than I began to fear another parting. Must it always be like that in life, no pleasure unalloyed? Are regret, fear or pain the inevitable complement of the highest happiness?

I would wait for her after dinner at a certain spot near the bank of the river, I said, and she promised to come as soon as she could, for she still had to report and be allocated new quarters.

What a pleasure it was to press my lips into the softness of her neck, to smell the sweetness of her hair, to hear the enchantment of her voice, and see the frank brightness of her smile. And what ineffable sadness to know all the while that it could not last for long. Soon I would be away, or she

would go off again, and who could say where our lives would lead us or whether either of us would return?

"We must use the time we have, Tolya," she said. And that is what we did.

A few days afterwards I was with Milovzorov in Moscow when he interrupted his discussions of my legends to ask me suddenly:

"What is your relationship with the girl Shura Rudenko?"

"Close," I said, rather surprised, "very close. I find her very attractive."

"Would you say that you love her?"

"Yes. Yes, I think I would."

"You know that she used to report on you, don't you?"

"I inferred as much, yes. Comrade Sverdlov made it fairly clear."

"I am a little surprised that you have resumed your former relations with her," Milovzorov said, looking at me intently.

I laughed.

"I have no secrets, Comrade Lieutenant," I said. "And I do not discuss State secrets, or secrets concerning my training or its purpose, with anyone, not even with her. In fact, least of all with her since our interest in each other is not professional."

"What makes you think she is so interested in you?"

I shrugged.

"I think she is. I may be wrong, but the illusion is pleasant and quite harmless."

Milovzorov leaned forward and thrust a finger at me as though to make his point.

"Not so harmless as you seem prepared to believe, my friend," he said. "This business of love is too raw, there is not enough intellectual appreciation in it. It is a thing of the senses and not of the mind. I advise you to leave that sort of thing to the common people who have nothing to lose by it. You and I are different. We are *tchekists*. With us the mind must govern everything and always be in complete control. If not, then we suffer and, what is worse, we may harm the State by failing in our sacred responsibility to it."

I knew he was right, then, but I loved Shura. I said nothing. He went on quietly, but with the patient earnestness of an elder brother trying to impress something important on a dullard.

"Love always reduces a man, comrade. It reduces the productive and retentive capacity of his mind; he works less, he thinks less accurately, he becomes unreliable. You hear me? Unreliable."

"I understand, Comrade Lieutenant."

"There is nothing against playing, of course, and the natural biological function between the sexes."

"I understand, comrade," I said again.

But I still continued to meet Shura.

ELEVEN

THE END OF VALENTIN

SOME THREE or four weeks passed and Shura had to leave for another sortie. All I could do was wish her the very best success and a safe return. But she was gone, and Milovzorov was right, for I would not have been so empty about the chest at that stage if I had never become close to Shura. What I felt was something like physical pain. But I resolved to put her out of my mind until some other happy chance of seeing her offered.

One day, while I was in Moscow, I phoned the old communal dwelling, where mother had lived before being evacuated, and an old neighbor told me that brother Valentin had left a message for me there to the effect that he was now stationed at Mytishche, not far north of Moscow.

I applied for, and received, permission to go and visit him. It was already a year since I had seen him last. I took a parcel of foodstuffs.

I easily found his unit, an anti-tank battalion, billeted under canvas in a wood. But when I found my brother I scarcely recognized him, he was so startlingly thin. He was now a sergeant and he was dressed in a khaki summer uniform quite unsuited to the already considerable cold. As soon as we had met and embraced, he went and obtained four hours' leave to accompany me to a nearby *pivnaia*, or beer hall, where we sat and talked over pots of beer, the only thing not rationed at the time in the Soviet Union.

"Have you had any news of Mother?" I asked.

He produced a letter from her and gave it to me.

"Read it later," he said. "Things are not too good for her. Food is very expensive and the money we send does not buy enough to feed and shelter Volodia and her. She cannot find a job. If she could, she says, she might be able to get a free meal per day over and above whatever they pay her."

I put the letter in my pocket.

"I will see what I can do. What about you? You look as though you don't get enough to eat either."

"None of us do here, Brother," he said bitterly. "Most of the men spend all their money trying to supplement their military rations, but since I send more than half my pay to Mother I can't do myself too well."

I had eaten so well lately that I felt a twinge of something like guilt.

"This parcel is for you, Valya," I said. "There is some canned meat, some stewed fruit and some tobacco."

"You are a good brother, Tolya," he smiled. "Thank you very much."

"You will get extra foodstuffs when you are down in the line," I said. "So that will be one compensation."

"How can that be?" he asked.

"Well," I said, "you did before, didn't you?"

"No, Brother, you're wrong. Rations there are pretty much the same as here."

"But what about Lend-Lease and the food from abroad?"

"I have yet to see any of it."

I shook my head. I had seen plenty of Lend-Lease supplies in Moscow.

"There must have been a slip-up," I said.

He laughed sarcastically.

"I don't think so, Tolya. We have orders to move to the front tonight and some of us haven't even our full winter equipment. You know it is cold at nighttime in the open air and slush and snow." He laughed again. I had never seen Valentin bitter like this before. His wide-eyed, almost ethereal look had vanished and had been replaced by the lazy, smoldering eyes and down-drawn mouth of the man who knows there is a catch to everything and that there is no relationship between truth and propaganda.

I put my hand on his shoulder.

"Courage, Valya. It will not always be like this. Have patience."

Valentin laughed loudly, and I wondered if there was hysteria in his laugh.

"You talk in platitudes. No, Tolya." He was serious. "It will not always be like this. One day it will change, perhaps, but we do not live all that long."

I saw my brother set off that night. He and his comrades

took their places in cattle wagons in a train bound for Rjev where a battle had been in progress for some time.

I stood alone on the bridge above the maze of criss-crossing rails in the Mytishche marshalling yard. My brother, down below, was already in the train. He should never have become a soldier, I thought. He had a softness, a sensitiveness that could have been better used elsewhere. Now he was going out once more, with the figure of a lanky boy, to face the shattering efficiency of the German Panzer units.

It was dusk and I felt depressed. Perhaps that is all there really was to it. Yet I had a distinct prescience, like a hard bolt of certainty, that I had already seen my brother for the last time.

Some weeks later, just before the end of the year, when I made a casual phone call to the old communal house to see if there were any messages, I was told there was a letter for me there. I went to get it.

It was a printed sheet of paper with only Valentin's name, rank, and a place-name written in ink. It read:

"Sergeant Granovsky, V. M., died as a hero in the defense of the homeland. He was buried in a collective grave in the village of Pakhomovo, Kalininskoi Province."

Later on I received a letter from my mother. She had heard from the nurse at the field hospital who looked after Valentin that he had died as the result of severe machine-gun bullet wounds in the head and body.

The news of Valentin's death had shocked Mother grievously, she said. None too well and underfed at the time, the shock had been too much for her. She had had a sort of seizure and a hemorrhage occurred which caused her to go quite blind in one eye. She complained of the terrible scarcity of food and the prices. She had written her letter with a pencil on a sheet of coarse wrapping paper.

It is odd, but that is the way that things happen sometimes.

A few days after getting Mother's letter I was walking along the street in Moscow when I caught sight of my old Butirki cell mate, Mickail Isaevich Sverdlov, whom I had known in the Red Cell. He was emerging from a ZIS car so that I gathered he was not only free but back in favor. Something told me not to approach him then, and I held

back. But I soon found out that he was the chief of the Meat Section of the People's Commissariat of Milk and Meat Industries, with offices at the corner of Arbat Street and Smolenskaia Place.

I went to see him there.

The splendid office he now occupied was big enough to contain some twenty such cells as we had shared three-and-a-half years before. It was sumptuously carpeted, curtained, paneled and furnished, too. The desk was enormous, and behind it stood Sverdlov, smiling broadly, his hand extended in greeting. We shook hands, glad at the meeting.

We talked for quite a long time about all sorts of things. He told me about his son whom he had lost at the front, about the victory that we all hoped for and about the genius in leadership of Comrade Stalin. I told him of Valentin and of Mother. Throughout, the only reference he made to the unpleasant times, and that an oblique one, was when he said that it was a pity my father had not been under Mikoyan because then he might have been freed as well. Yes, it was a pity, but there! What could be done about that? Now all that was past, anyhow, and we were marching together to victory.

(Sverdlov, you hungry mongrel dog, you are licking the hand that has beaten you!—And what about me?)

"Things are terribly difficult for Mother," I said. "I cannot send her much. Brother Valentin used to send her what he could, but that has now stopped too. Could you perhaps do anything that would help her get employment?"

People do not like being asked favors, and he hesitated.

"Tell her," he said, "to go to the meat packing plant in Sverdlovsk town and I will do my best to arrange employment for her there. She will have at least one full meal of good food every working day besides her wages. That is the best I can do."

I thanked my old comrade and left him. Soon afterwards, I heard from my mother, to whom I had already transmitted Sverdlov's instructions, that he had kept his word and her situation was much improved.

TWELVE

THEORY AND PRACTICE

IT WAS a small study and was used as a lecture room for individual students. A tall, well-built man with black hair and lazy eyes sprawled in a swivel chair behind a desk and told me that I must call him by the name of Rasputin.

"I am here," said Rasputin, "to convey to you an idea of the problems that are frequently presented to the espionage and counter-espionage agent by women. I shall also show you how to overcome these problems."

I thought he was about to yawn but he did not.

"First," he continued, "we will have a little theory and then—practice."

He went on to give me the information that it was common in the West, especially in the United States and Canada, for women to belong to large feminist or, at any rate, exclusively feminine organizations and that such organizations often were of very real influence on certain aspects of national affairs. The directors of such organizations, he said, were as a rule elderly ladies of ample private means and a surfeit of the ordinary pleasures of life. They could not be tempted by money, nor by parties nor any ordinary gift. But a young, ardent and skilled lover is no ordinary gift. It would be a new taste, a new experience. It would be something that could serve to influence things.

"You need only be concerned with women," he said reassuringly. "If you had been of a different cast of mind you would receive training on how to appeal to homosexuals. There are many homosexuals in the West and for the most part they live sexually frustrated lives. Some are intelligent and occupy positions of consequence, but where their sexual satisfaction is concerned, or the prospect of it, they are more unstable than women."

He went on to tell me how it is an ingrained habit in the West for men to consult their wives on anything of impor-

tance, and that wives have consequently an indirect power over organizations, even nations, out of all proportion with their scant qualification for it. He told me how a woman does not reason like a man does. Her thinking processes are not usually directed to arrive at a conclusion but in order to justify a conclusion arrived at independently. A woman can sometimes be of invaluable help to an agent in bringing a subject round to a certain desired receptivity of mind and, conversely, she can, if the agent should commit himself and then fail her sexually, completely nullify the work of months or years. A woman uses her knowledge of what is important to men in order to get from them what is important to herself.

"Now the whole business of marriage and love and the relationship between the sexes," he said, "arises from the appetite that a man entertains for the body of a woman and the need that a woman feels for protection and the rhythmic satisfaction of a purely biological urge to experience the sensation of total bodily surrender.

"Love can be defined as a very strong personal or biological attachment which one person feels towards another or, more rarely, which two people feel towards each other.

"Now, here is a very important point. Let a woman know that you love her, that you want her, and you excite her. But if you are unsuccessful in the sexual expression of your love, the more you love her personally without this cardinal success, the more you arouse in her contempt and boredom. You become tedious and even hated, at best tolerated. But, be eminently successful in satisfying a woman sexually and even if you do not love her she will love you, and a woman's love is more passionate and less selfish than a man's in all its manifestations, bar the sexual one. The importance of this cannot be stressed. Do you fully understand me?"

"Yes, comrade."

"Well, I am going to teach you how to produce this effect in women, in any woman, whether they attract you personally or not. Furthermore, I am going to show you how, with a little training, you can do this a number of times and be none the worse for it."

This little talk was followed by a lesson on human anatomy in which charts were used and an enormous amount of attention was devoted to certain parts of the body and to what were called primary and secondary zones of excitation.

Everything was conducted in a most academic style, and by the end of the lecture a woman seemed just about as dry as dust to me.

"You will write out to me the principles which I have been expounding to you and present your paper tomorrow," said Rasputin. "Then, if everything is satisfactory, we will proceed immediately to the practical side."

"What does that entail?" I asked.

"What does practice usually mean?" he countered. Then it dawned on me and I got an extraordinary sensation.

Would the woman be pretty? Or would she be a hideous old sack? Would she laugh at me? And then—Shura? What about her? Perhaps I should never see her again. And anyhow, who knows, maybe she knew more of these things than I did. Anyway, it was all in the line of duty and there was nothing I could do about it anyhow, even if I wanted to.

Next day I went out with Rasputin to a closely guarded house on the Leningrad road. We walked in and found ourselves in a bare room furnished only with a couple of arm-chairs and a divan. Rasputin told me to sit down and pay attention. We were about to start the practical side and my guts were in a turmoil and on the point of playing tricks on me. Rasputin took off all his clothes and walked naked to a wall where he pressed a button, at which a door opened and a most plain, thick-set peasant girl walked in. She stared with a wordless and blank fascination at the white and naked form of Rasputin who, however, paid her scant attention but, turning to me, said:

"She is no beauty, as you see, and she does not attract me in the least. But I am going to make love to her and make sure that she is richly satisfied."

He approached her with a smile and drew her to the divan. There he began to undress her, and I saw that she started to tremble slightly.

"I am still not in the least excited," said Rasputin, "although she is already naked beside me. But obviously I must become excited. Now, in cases like this, it is best to look deeply into a woman's eyes, for it is surprising how the eyes of a woman are so seldom properly noticed and yet with their message, their desire or their challenge they can, coupled with the contact of flesh with flesh, arouse a man. Once you have achieved a certain excitement and are in actual physical contact with a woman like this one you

must fill your mind with a vision of the most satisfying sexual experience you have ever had, one that you would like to repeat. Conversely, if the girl with whom you are lying does attract you but circumstances do not permit you to reach an orgasm, when you feel you are in danger of going too far you must concentrate your mind on anything that repels you. It is not easy, but it comes with practice."

He then started, with a full use of primary and secondary zones of excitation, to make love to the girl. She seemed to respond with an elephantine sluggishness, but then, quite suddenly, she arched her back, pressing the back of her head down into the divan, and cried out—a cry that any man will recognize. Soon she cried out again, and then she lay back relaxed and kissed Rasputin.

She dressed herself and left the room.

In the course of the next eight hours that we spent there Rasputin took five women, and it was quite clear to me that each one had been abundantly satisfied. He himself appeared no more tired than if he had spent a day on the beach.

A day or two later it was my turn to start practicing.

With moist palms and dry throat I confronted the first woman while Rasputin lounged in the armchair and drew slowly at a cigarette.

The worst of it was that the girl was quite extraordinarily attractive and I, too consumed with my purpose, made a fool of myself and brought down on my head an avalanche of abuse and sarcastic comment from Rasputin because by the time she was beginning to feel some enjoyment from the contact I was already quite incapable of continuing a moment longer. The situation was painful in the extreme and I resolved that it would never happen again.

It did not. But while I was still at the initial stage of the practical course something happened which, unpleasant as it was from another point of view, helped me achieve the desired quality of dispassionate efficiency in sexual intercourse, of aloof participation.

Shura Rudenko returned.

She was limping. When we were together she showed me how the bullet had passed through the calf of her leg near the knee, tearing the muscle but missing the bone. It was

nothing. Perhaps by summer time there would scarcely be a mark.

She was glad to be back. I was tired and irritated after prolonged contact with Rasputin's women. This had a poor effect on the way I acted when I met her; there was a sense of need and a conscientious attempt to behave as I remembered having behaved before. I thought I would have great difficulty in making love to her, but the difficulty, or the illusion of it, disappeared until afterwards, and then manifested itself in an uneasy silence that seemed to communicate itself, for Shura said:

"You are changed, Tolya. Are you afraid of something?"

"I was thinking, Shura. Tell me, when we are together do you deny yourself to other men?"

"What do you mean, 'when we are together'?"

"Like now and for the next few days when we will both be living in the school."

"Of course I have nothing to do with other men."

"And when you are away?"

She was not confused.

"Sometimes. When I am away who knows if I shall ever see you again?"

"You feel no remorse when you return?"

She laughed.

"It would be rather stupid, wouldn't it? After all, you know it is you I love."

Did I know it? Yes, I *did* know it, I *must* know it.

"Shura," I said, "we must be together as often as we can. We must enjoy each other, like fire enjoys dry wood. I will make you happy."

And I would, too.

But afterwards, whenever I felt the clasp of her hands on the small of my back and heard her soft moan of shut-eyed ecstasy, I wondered if there were not another, somewhere, whom she preferred. Yet might there not be something lacking in precisely the fact of this thing being the dominating link between man and woman, the link that commands loyalty. As for that, perhaps loyalty is no more than an illusion, a comfort that the cowardly mind invents for itself—or, perhaps, it really does exist.

THIRTEEN

AN INTERESTING DUTY

SO I went on with my lessons in Moscow, interspersed with orientation lectures, my training at the school, Rasputin's women and, whenever I could, Shura, who gave me courage for love.

Under Rasputin's guidance I became hard and steady as a blacksmith's anvil. I mastered his tricks until I was able, at will, to be an instrument of joy to any woman, to provoke the maximum pleasure without sharing in it. Sometimes, even with Shura, I did not share in her pleasure. Not that it was normally difficult, just something that came with practice, yet this reining in of genuine passion was the most demanding test I could then conceive.

After that my training took a different turn so that it was I who parted first from Shura, and not she from me.

I started intensive parachute training: first from a balloon, then from aircraft in daylight and lastly at night and in various bad weather conditions. I enjoyed it. Then one day I was told I had finished the course and had been transferred to the first section of the Fourth Department of the NKGB (once more separated from NKVD) with orders to report to Major Georgi Dmitrievich Kulagin, its chief. He was a calm, well-bred fellow with quite a record and an air of unassuming frankness that made me feel friendly towards him right from the start. He told me I had been promoted to captain of State Security and took me in to see Major-General Sudoplatov, chief of the Fourth Department. It was from Sudoplatov that I got the first specific indications of what I was being prepared for.

"You have a very interesting duty to perform, Captain Granovsky," he said, "as soon as we can be sure that you are to be trusted. You may be sent abroad to remain there for years, maybe all your life, as a permanent agent of the

People's Commissariat of State Security. You will have the chance to win great honors."

I began to have daily talks with my superior officers who briefed me incessantly on the future that had been mapped out for me. Concurrently, at the Moscow apartment still at my disposal, memory training continued with almost redoubled vigor. Strange texts were given to me and I was told to read them twice. Next day I had to reproduce their content. I did not manage to get to see Shura more than once a week.

"You will obey the Germans in everything. Show them a willingness to cooperate such as they have never seen," Kulagin said. "They have just been defeated at Stalingrad and their total collapse is only a question of time. When they feel that it can no longer be averted they will try to make a separate armistice with the western allies. Naziism will suddenly disappear as if it had never existed and the whole German nation will regroup and hire itself to the capitalists under the banner of anti-communism. You must let no single opportunity pass of taking part in the formation of anti-Soviet societies and youth groups. You must devote yourself to the task of becoming a leader in the movement. The better you succeed in this the greater the likelihood will be of your being noticed and encouraged by the Anglo-American armies and their governments. They may even solicit your services on their behalf as they will be more likely to trust the sincerity of your sentiments than those of the ex-Nazi Germans.

"The more confidence they place in you the more use you will be to your homeland. You will not be alone. When you are in need you will know how to apprise us and an agent will contact you."

On one occasion I asked about existing contacts in the western countries. Kulagin illustrated his assertion that the Soviet was well prepared by a single example.

"During the hard years when Lenin was still alive, although we received no official recognition and sympathy, there was plenty of private interest in what we were doing. From all sorts of countries came offers of help, contributions, support. One of these offers came from a rich old man living in the South of the United States. He had no children and, out of sympathy with our humanitarian ideals and our hardships suffered on the way to achievement, he

would be glad to leave his whole estate to whatever fund we cared to name. We contacted him more directly and persuaded him to adopt one of our men as his son. This man, once a refugee in the U.S.A., is now an American citizen and a rich man in his own right. But he is ours to use whenever the need arises."

During this time I had a great deal of studying to do. Files of treatises and articles on espionage organizations the world over were given to me from the Special Bureau of the NKGB and, in order that I might be certain of absolute quiet and uninterrupted study periods, another apartment on Kirov Street 37, was put at my disposal. I discovered that my neighbor there was the famous composer Dimitri Shostakovich, who had already been taken in hand by the NKGB and was thus, though in a different degree, a colleague of mine.

Among the many things that I read in the seclusion of the apartment on Kirov Street was Ambassador Joseph E. Davies' book, *Mission to Moscow*. I was instructed to read this book not, obviously, to learn anything about the Soviet Union or Soviet politics, but to familiarize myself with a concrete example of how gratuitous propaganda in favor of the Soviet Union can be produced by people abroad who are not even remotely guided by the Communist Party. As I read the book I could not help but agree with a remark made by Kulagin to the effect that some members of the capitalist intelligentsia, easily assuming a sort of superior knowledge of things they barely know, often produce the best Soviet propaganda, portraying life and progress in the Soviet Union in even more flamboyant colors than the official Communist press. Here, surely, was an example of this. This man, personally chosen by President Roosevelt as American Ambassador to Moscow, and whose entire knowledge of the Soviet Union was acquired within the short period of two years while he led the rather special and artificial life of a diplomatic representative with the necessarily reduced opportunity for contact with ordinary people, wrote this:

"No leaders of a nation have been so misrepresented and misunderstood as those in the Soviet Government during those critical years between the two world wars. I hope that my book will help to correct that misunderstanding in presenting Russia and its people in their gallant struggle to

preserve the peace until ruthless aggression made war inevitable."

In his chapter on Soviet Industry in the Urals, which is dated November 15, 1941, and was written when he was already back in Washington, he reproduces a letter in which he reassures the Secretary of State. It was written when the Soviet Union had already shocked the free world by signing a pact of friendship with Hitler's Germany, after the infamous Nazi-Communist invasion and partition of Poland, after the ruthless and savage annexation by the Soviets of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and after the Soviet's unsuccessful attempt to conquer Finland.

He wrote of places that had been well known to me as a child. In those days I still had illusions, and it was apparent to me that this mature diplomat still had plenty of them himself. It was clear that he had not been disillusioned. No doubt the truth is hard to come by for those who do not like the sound of it—dreams and illusions are so much more pleasant. He wrote in praise of Soviet industrial growth and mentioned that 1,800,000 tons of cast iron had been produced in Magnitogorsk during the year 1938. But why did he not mention, even as a footnote, that all these tons of iron were produced in a plant built over the bones of thousands of slaves worked to death under the bayonets of guards of NKVD troops? How many thousand slaves? At least 18,000. Now that would have been a true and representative statistic to cite: 100 tons of iron to one human life.

He wrote about the great Magnitogorsk Plant, the Cheliabinsk Plant and the Berezniaki Plant. But he said nothing of the whereabouts of Zaveniagin, who built Magnitogorsk, of Director Lovin, who built Cheliabinsk, or of my own father, builder of the Berezniaki Plant. He did not tell how these engineers, men to whom their country owed so much for their unceasing and dedicated labor, together with thousands of lesser engineers, technicians and workers, had been arrested and liquidated. In such western cities as Birmingham and Pittsburgh, there are workers who drive to work in brand new cars as well as those who use the bus or train. But every one of them has at least one pair of good leather shoes and at least one suit to wear on Sunday, and every one of them is free to say whatever he wants to say. None of them, even the least fortunate and least successful, would

ever have reason to ponder how many men had paid with their lives for the great factories, how many men had been deliberately expended and murdered for the piles of brick and mortar and concrete.

He wrote of things that I had personal knowledge of, and he made them sound like different events altogether. With a personal bias that kept his interest riveted unerringly on the brighter side, the more congenial side, of everything he managed to convey a false and worthless—but highly dangerous—impression of the Soviet Union. His optimistic enthusiasm, inexcusable in a responsible statesman, drew him into the trap of complicity by omission. Coldly and unsympathetically he described how he had attended the hearings at the public trials which resulted in sentence of death for so many heroes of the revolution, men who had needed courage and fibre to build the first Soviet state in the world and whose hands he had been only too glad to shake so shortly before. He wrote like a man hypnotized by the evidence of absolute power and tyranny, like a man for whom, whether he admits it or not, might is right and the stronger always the wiser.

But how can progress be extolled, much less assessed, if the cost of it in human lives and suffering is not taken into account? There can be no sane way of assessing progress except in terms of benefit to human life and relief of human suffering. Production statistics simply do not count when on the other side of the balance sheet are terror, slavery, torture and death. As I read this man's eulogies of Stalin and the Communist Party my blood boiled (with hatred of him). He who above all men should have written a conscientiously honest, balanced and thoughtful book, wrote instead like an unprincipled fool.

Later, when we were discussing the book, Kulagin asked me this question:

"Suppose you, Granovsky, in the course of your work for Soviet intelligence had to find and get the help of an influential citizen in, say, England or the U.S.A. Do you suppose this man Davies would be suitable?" Kulagin waited patiently for me to think out my reply.

"I think his suitability would depend," I answered, "on the sort of help he would be required to give. He could probably be used quite effectively if he were kept in the dark and

not allowed to know to what extent he was being used. I would say he is probably a vain man, too free with his views and too fond of expressing them, and therefore not the sort of man to be relied upon completely. I think he would be a liability in serious intelligence work, even though his private political ideology may recommend him for our cause."

"I agree with you." Kulagin smiled. "In serious work it is better to steer clear of such as this man. But his usefulness should not be underestimated when what we want is a presentable front and a little noisy propaganda."

The time soon came to discuss the way in which I should establish contact with the Germans, and various alternatives were suggested and discarded. Finally one method presented itself which seemed as far as possible foolproof and most likely to lead to the best results in the long run. This was the plan:

I would be dropped by parachute with four other men behind the German lines. We would each of us carry a map and some explosives, and each man except myself would imagine himself to be on a sabotage mission. We would be armed with sub-machine guns and have several rounds of ammunition, but only my gun and ammunition would be in perfect working order. Being dropped by parachute we would naturally land at some distance from one another, and would not see each other land since it would be dark. We would all have to find our separate ways to the rendezvous. It would be my first job to stalk the other members of the party and shoot them down. But one of them must not be killed—he must only be wounded and disarmed and "left for dead," so that in his ignorance he would serve as a corroborating witness to the Germans to whom I would give myself up with the story that I had deserted and prevented sabotage.

Once that phase had been decided on, Kulagin and the others tried to foresee what would follow. After being thoroughly screened, they thought, I would, in all likelihood, be asked to broadcast propaganda over the radio. I must show myself eager to do so, but in this connection, I was instructed as follows:

"Most foreign anti-Soviet publications attack us for the alleged poverty of some of our people, for our prisons, concentration camps and Cheka, of which they know very little. This sort of attack is not in the least dangerous to our cause

—in every country there are poor people, jails and police. Furthermore, Communist sympathizers are convinced that, being loyal to the doctrine, they themselves would never be sent to jail under a Soviet government except for a specific crime. They are quite prepared to believe that our Cheka, concentration camps and restrictions exist because they have to exist, and many feel that similar things should exist in their own countries, too. If a man is in any way inclined towards the Communist doctrine, he will not be in the least deterred by being reminded of the harder and severer aspects of Soviet government.

“When you talk publicly against the Soviet Union,” I was told, “follow the same harmless line as fanatically as possible. Talk of purges, prisons and the Cheka. But do not draw political conclusions opposed to the Marxist-Leninist philosophy. If you do that you are finished, finished for good.”

I learned that I must convey the impression that the members of the Politburo were unaware of the extreme misery of some of their subjects, that Stalin and his People’s Commissars were theorists and idealists whose projects were only imperfectly put into practice and that the authority of lesser leaders was abused for their own advantage. The Communist sympathizers would consider me a renegade and a traitor, and that was as it should and must be—until the proper time.

I was worked up to a pitch of expectancy and, in spite of myself, could scarcely endure the waiting.

FOURTEEN

NO LACK OF BLOODING

THE TWO engines of the DC-3 droned in our ears and all eleven of us sat in silence in the darkness 18,000 feet above the "little land," as we called our guerrilla-dominated pockets in the German-occupied part of the Soviet Union. Five men faced six and none spoke a word, each with his parachute strapped on and the ripcord hooked on the center rail, sitting straight and uncomfortable in our harness and equipment. It was not the real thing yet for me; just a normal sortie to get myself blooded. But it was serious business nonetheless.

I had said goodbye to Shura and I had reduced her to sweet exhaustion with my love. She would remember and I would be back. There was no fear. Down below, somewhere ahead, there was an organized and experienced guerrilla unit and beside me ten men who knew what they were doing. I must prove myself. I must know the calculated kill, the kill that is a stile on the pathway to an objective, the dispassionate, routine and perfectly ruthless kill.

The co-pilot came out of the control cabin and gave us the order to prepare to jump. The door was opened and some extra equipment was shoved out first. Then we jumped. One, two, three—and I leapt out with a push in the small of my back and started a curled-up somersault into the dark. When the chute opened and jerked me upright again I looked down and saw five lights, like two triangles with a common apex. Within a few seconds the lights went out. All of us and our cargo were floating down and there was no further need of them.

All of us landed safely, each being met by a member of the Kovpak guerrilla unit we had to join. Soon we grouped up and were led off across the fields to the guerrilla camp in a coppice. Sentries with automatic Soviet PPD guns, apprised of our arrival, stood by and watched us pass into a

sparsely covered trench. The trench tunneled into a large barrack room, shored and beamed like a coal mine, and measuring some seventy feet by twenty-five. Against the earth side walls of the dugout were rows of bunks and in the center a rough deal board nailed crudely onto upright stumps of log and rough benches running along each side. We removed our equipment and each claimed a bunk. Then, perhaps an hour later, a heavily armed, stocky, dark-haired man marched in and introduced himself as Lieutenant-Colonel Vershigora, headquarters commander.

"See that your men make themselves comfortable, Captain," he said to me, "and report to me tomorrow morning at nine o'clock for briefing."

With that he left us and we made ourselves ready for sleep.

Next morning we were shown the cookhouse where we received a breakfast of cabbage soup and then I reported to Colonel Vershigora who was with his assistant (also a lieutenant-colonel) Lebedev. The latter laid out a map of the nearby township of Drogobich and explained the plan of action.

We were to raid the Gestapo city sub-section headquarters on Shevchenko Street and bring away the files held there, classification lists of inhabitants and so forth. Zero hour for the assault would be four o'clock next morning. We would have the rest of the day for preparing our kit and taking a good rest. Information on where sentries were stationed was given us in a very detailed manner.

At around two in the morning we set off across country towards Drogobich and, following the darkest streets, entered the town and reached the Gestapo H.Q. a few minutes past four. I left two men with guns trained on the door of the building, an ordinary two-storied house, to cover our retreat, and advanced slowly with the others. Then we had a bit of luck. The sentry, whom we dimly descried, seated in the doorway of the house, was asleep. We could not be sure of this at first, however, so I edged along the front wall of the house until I was near enough to hear his regular and stertorous breathing. A little nearer and I could touch him with my outstretched hand. I hit him with all my strength with the barrel of my automatic pistol across the back of his neck, which was extended as his head drooped forward in sleep. As he slumped sideways I whipped off his helmet

and caught him again hard across the temple. He would worry no one any more.

But I was inexperienced. Before it happened I realized I had made a mistake. I had forgotten to hold his rifle and it clattered to the ground with a sound that sounded to me like a barrage of artillery. I froze still, waiting for a sound of movement inside the house. But there was none. I edged back to the crouched and waiting men by the roadside.

"We go in now," I said.

Carefully but quickly we filed past the sprawling form of the dead sentry to the door of the house.

It was locked! How the hell could we avoid making a noise now? Then one of the men beside me had an idea. Why not search the sentry's pockets to see if he had a key? As we did this I dispersed the men so as not to have them grouped up together over the body of the enemy, hoping that nothing would happen to awaken the men inside the house before we were ready.

Sure enough, there was a key there and it opened the door. The plan then proceeded normally. A sergeant and three men examined the ground floor to find the files we were looking for and I led the others upstairs to overcome anyone who might wish to put up a show of resistance. It was too easy. As I opened the door to a room upstairs a comrade shone a flashlight and I saw a blond, disheveled German spring out of bed. He was in pajamas. Before he was properly on his feet I fetched him a kick in the groin with the toe of my boot and left him to be finished off by one of my men. In the next room the occupant was still asleep. There was no problem there. There was no one else upstairs so we went down again. The sergeant had opened all the filing cabinets and a dead German corporal rested his head in a pool of his own blood on the desk at which he had been dozing when we came in.

It took us an anxious half-hour to make sure that we had found all we wanted and we left the building. A low whistle outside summoned the two men I had left to cover us and we were away, our mission successfully accomplished.

By sunrise we were approaching the camp and, giving the password, were let through to have our breakfast and make our report.

I stayed there nine days before being air-lifted out, and

during that time went out almost every night on a different mission.

There was no lack of bleeding, for no missions were carried out by me where it did not at one time or another become necessary to put someone out of the way. But there was no shooting, for there had to be no noise. We bludgeoned, stabbed and kicked. At first the sudden sight of inert flesh that a minute before had been a vigorous man made me overpoweringly aware of phlegm in my throat so that I wanted to spit, but later I found that the swift, precise, lethal action that preceded the calculated death exhilarated me. I found with satisfaction that my body responded to urgency with a clean and unhesitant directness and my mind was as cool as if I had been playing a game of chess against an inferior opponent.

One incident especially sticks out in my mind. We had gone out to place charges of dynamite to demolish a building which we believed to be a small munitions dump. The building was inside a walled enclosure and we managed to get in without being spotted by the single sentry who patrolled the outside. We did not deliberately try to kill him before getting in because, apart from the risk of noise, it did not seem necessary. As it turned out this was foolish of us. In any event, we were inside, had placed our charges and lit the fuses when it occurred to us that we did not know where the sentry was, at which part of the wall. After a few seconds we decided to disperse and climb the wall at various points. If any man ran into the sentry, it would be his bad luck. We all crept to the wall and prepared to spring up onto it and jump down on the other side. I unsheathed my knife and held it between my teeth (just as wild Caucasian Abrecks do in story books) as I gripped the top of the wall, perhaps some seven and a half feet high, with my hands and sprang up so that my stomach was level with the top of the wall. I was just about to swing one leg over the top when, in the last pale light of an old moon, I saw the sentry standing directly beneath me. Without thinking I closed like a jackknife over the top of the wall, reached out with my left hand for the sentry's chin and jerked his head back against the wall. Half realizing what was happening, he struck at me ineffectually with the muzzle of his rifle, while I with my right hand withdrew the knife from between my teeth and cut him hard across the throat below my hand.

Both my hands were deluged in a spurt of warm blood as the sentry sank to the ground. On his back, his eyes staring, he beat the ground with his heels and tried to scream. But all he did was gurgle horribly.

The others were already waiting for me near my cover group so we made off without delay.

During the short time I was attached to the Kovpak guerrilla unit I found that, while they occasionally had certain supplies dropped to them at night, though these were generally of ammunition, the men were expected to live off the land. One might have thought that this would not have been difficult since they were, after all, patriots in their own country and should have been able to rely on a steady supply of foodstuffs from the peasantry of the area. But this was not the case at all. The peasants, ignorant folk for the most part, seemed to feel that they already had enough trouble on their hands with the demands made on them by the German garrison and wished to have no truck with the partisans at all. Thus, in order to get food, it consistently happened that the partisans had to raid their own countrymen's farms, not infrequently having to overcome violent resistance on the part of the peasants and even of their womenfolk. Furthermore, the local population hated the partisans because for every German killed by them instant reprisals were taken on the villagers and peasants. Unreasonable and pigheaded as it was, it appeared they hated the partisans more than the Germans who were their real enemies.

And yet there was considerable recruiting into the partisan ranks from the local peasantry. There was no ideology in this, however. It was simply the result of a very practical attitude of mind. The young peasants saw quite clearly that they would be much safer as marauder than as marauded—safer and better fed.

FIFTEEN

THE ORDJONIKIDZE PAPERS

AFTER THE limited objectives described in the last chapter had been accomplished, on my return to Moscow I took up the threads just where I had left them, almost as if I had not been away at all. There was only one difference. During my absence Shura had been sent out on another sortie. Oddly enough, having now been on one myself I did not feel as anxious about her as I had before. It was nothing more than a question of planning and being physically fit. That and a little luck were all that was needed.

But I missed her. I had been looking forward to being with her again.

I read my papers, wrote and discussed my legends and prepared myself for the great task ahead. I met many new people, high-ranking *tchekists* of the NKGB and guerrilla leaders. I am really headed somewhere at last, I thought.

But there was a surprise in store for me.

Just when I thought that there could scarcely be any more training that could be drummed into me, no more relevant detail to absorb, I received a summons to report for a special job to Colonel Litkins. Is it possible, I wondered, that I am being put back on internal counter-intelligence work? It was.

Litkins greeted me with his old charming smile and asked how I had fared since he had seen me last. It was an unnecessary question because he had obviously informed himself of that before asking for me to be sent to him. He did not waste much time in preliminaries, therefore, but told me straight off that there was a case brewing which involved relatives of enemies of the people and that Sverdlov (the antipathetic Sverdlov), now a lieutenant-colonel, would give me the full briefing.

Sverdlov, as arrogant and supercilious as ever, started straight off by addressing me by my cover name of Shiskin.

This was intended to convey that to him I was still an agent of the counter-intelligence in spite of my captain's rank and the work I had done in other, if allied, fields.

"You must immediately establish contact, the closest possible contact, with the terrorist group headed by Volodia Rukhimovich. Here is a list of its members," and he thrust a list of names at me.

With considerable surprise I noticed that Erik Korkmasov's name figured there. Poor Erik. What the hell was he up to? I remembered his favor to me before I was arrested and our former friendship as boys. I had met him later, too, when he had returned wounded from the front. And now this?

"The movement was discovered by an agent of the NKGB Section of the City and Province of Moscow," Sverdlov went on, "and they are working actively on it. It will not look too well for us, however, if the prize falls to them when all this is going on right under our very noses. It is believed that the group is planning an attempt on Stalin's life scheduled to take place on May 1st. The traitors must be brought in and convicted before then—but not by the Moscow NKGB Section agent. It must be done by us. Do not waste time, for there is none to lose." And, ominously enough, he added, "We are relying on you."

I did not know personally any of the other people named, so I went straight to see Erik. We talked for some time, but nothing came out in his conversation. I therefore left him and concealed myself in the doorway of the house opposite his. I waited there for something like two hours before Erik emerged and started off down the street at a quick walk. I followed him carefully and saw him enter a single-storied house in Spiridonovka Street. Once again I waited and saw Erik come out of the house accompanied by two girls, one tall, fair and well-built and the other slight and dark with a southern look to her features. They walked along together as people walk when they have nothing on their minds, and they were going towards Arbatskaia Square. I guessed they were going to the cinema and, at the risk of losing them, made my own way there as quickly as I could and took my place in the queue. Sure enough, they came along and by the time they arrived there were several people standing in line behind me. I called out to Erik:

"Don't bother about the queue. I can buy tickets for the four of us."

A little out of countenance, Erik approached and did the only thing he could do—he introduced me to his friends. We talked sporadically, the two girls and I, Erik taking no part in it at all, and edged our way forward with the queue to the ticket office. Unfortunately, as frequently happens in Moscow, just before we reached the ticket office it was closed and a "House Full" sign was hung up outside it. There were small wails of disappointment from the girls.

As it turned out, however, this was rather better for me than if we had gone into the cinema.

"Well," I said, "now we are all of us in the same boat. Time to spend and nowhere to go. Let's all go to that restaurant across the square and have something to drink together."

The girls instantly agreed and Erik, although he said nothing, followed along with them. The girls were obviously rather impressed at the choice of restaurant because it was a very expensive place and quite beyond the means of most people. We sat at a corner table and ordered cakes and wine with which we drank a toast to each other. While Erik remained curiously silent, I flirted idly with both the girls. We laughed and told anecdotes and the girls chided Erik for being so silent, at which he became more confused still. Finally, the dark, southern-looking girl, who was called Svetlana, invited us all back to her house to continue the party there. I paid the bill and we left.

It was the same house on Spiridonovka Street from which I had seen them all come an hour or two before, next door to the house where Litvinov lived and further down from where Yagoda had used to live. It was a very fine house of some seven or eight rooms. Her mother was a surgeon and nowadays held the rank of colonel in the medical service, and her father had died some years before.

I felt there was not much time I could reasonably afford to spend on talking nonsense with these girls and decided to lead the conversation into the proper channels. It would be good to have something more to drink first, though, so I asked if there was any vodka to be had. No, there was unfortunately none in the house, but everyone felt like having a drink. I got up, therefore, and went out to buy some, re-

turning within a few minutes with a litre bottle under my arm.

Filling the glasses I stood up with mine in my hand and said:

"All our parents belonged to the Old Guard and they all, except your mother and father, Svetlana, suffered for it. I give a toast to the Old Guard—the true Communists."

"And may they return!" cried Svetlana, looking at me with an excited intensity.

We all drank our glasses empty at this toast and almost immediately the mist of indiscretion swam in the eyes of the girls. We remembered our parents and recalled the old times and soon the tall girl, Tatiana Poluiian, said:

"There is a man you must meet, Tolya."

"Who is he?" I asked.

"We know him as Alexei only, but he has some very interesting ideas."

"What sort of ideas?"

"Ask Erik, he can tell you better than anyone else."

I turned to Erik and saw that his face was set tight and he was looking angrily at Tatiana.

"There is nothing to tell," he snapped.

"What is the matter, Erik?" Svetlana asked. "Isn't Tolya an old friend of yours?"

"He is. But I'm saying nothing, even to Tolya," Erik said with finality.

Normally speaking, at this unequivocal show of no confidence I should have left the house, even though it was not Erik's. But I could not do that. I had a job to do.

"Erik," I said slowly, "this is not your house and you are being very rude. It seems you not only don't trust me but you don't mind who knows it. Are you trying to make me leave the house?"

"Yes!"

He almost spat the word at me and leaned forward truculently at me in his chair.

I stood up. Erik was handicapped by having been wounded in the shoulder, but in my profession, to let a detail like that deter me would have been squeamish. I struck him hard across the face with the back of my hand. I stood over him, ready for any retaliation he might care to offer. His face was white, but he remained still and seated.

"I think you had better apologize, Erik," I said. "You have behaved like a pig in a friend's house."

"I apologize! That's what you'd like to hear, isn't it?" And with that he rose and stamped out of the house.

We were all silent. I poured another glass of vodka for the girls and myself, and we drank it silently.

"Perhaps we had better break up the party," suggested Tatiana.

"I am sorry," I said.

"It wasn't your fault, Tolya," she said. "Erik is a funny fellow sometimes. He has become terribly moody and changeable lately." She stood up and prepared to leave.

"Perhaps I can take you home?" I ventured.

"All right," she agreed.

We said goodbye to Svetlana and left the house together. Neither of us found much to say to each other as we walked the short distance to Vorovsky Street, number 9, where Tatiana lived. We stopped at the door and Tatiana said good-night and thanked me for walking home with her. As she walked to the door I called her.

"Tatiana!"

She turned on the threshold and stood still.

"Yes, Tolya?" she said.

"May I come in with you? I have something I want to say to you."

She hesitated a second and then said:

"Come in, then."

I walked with her up a flight of stairs to a room on the second floor. There was a single bed, a cheap wardrobe and dressing table, two chairs and an unvarnished deal table between them. There was no carpet to cover the wide boarded floor, but the room was very clean and neatly kept.

"This is my home, Tolya," she said. "Sit down on the bed. It is more comfortable than the chairs. I will get us another glass of vodka."

She came and sat on the bed beside me, and we drank our glasses of vodka. It was clear she expected something of me and I knew it would be silly to disappoint her. She asked me if I wanted another glass of vodka and I said no, I did not. I put the empty glass on the floor and with well-simulated singleness of purpose silently set about to give her what she expected of me.

Afterwards, at the point where men are normally content

to be left for a space alone with their own thoughts and when women, on the contrary, feel communicative and confiding and bore you with questions about whether you really love them just a little, and so forth, I asked Tatiana outright what her connection was with Erik.

"Not like this," she said.

"How then?"

And she told me that some time after the arrest of her parents she had come under the protection, or rather become the mistress, of a young power station executive called Eosip. He had lived with her, taught her to love with her body, and had left her unmarried to go to the Fourth Ukrainian front. He sent no money and it was clear he had forgotten her. Then Erik turned up and started to go out with her. He wanted her and was pleased with her nearness and to be in her room. One night he fell asleep there and only awakened the following morning. It was a great joke.

At that time, having been wounded at the front and being of no further use as a soldier, he was taking a course of technical studies and used to visit Tatiana in the evenings. She used to wash his clothes, sew on his buttons and treat him in these small things as a wife treats her husband. But Erik never seemed to desire the bodily intimacy that their relationship already seemed to justify. One night, Tatiana said, she decided to take the initiative, give him the courage he seemed to lack, and she undressed in front of him and got into bed, inviting him to follow.

"I'll sleep next to you, if you like," he said. "But as a brother with a sister. There can be nothing more between us."

She realized there was something psychologically wrong with Erik. He was impotent. But she felt sorry for him and the friendship continued without change until the afternoon Tatiana got the idea to take some sandwiches for him down to the institute where he was supposed to be studying. He had been expelled, she was told, for slackness and frequent non-attendance. What did he do, then, she asked herself. He just idled.

"Where does this man Alexei come into the picture?" I asked.

"He is a friend of the Rukhimoviches. You know them, don't you?"

"I remember knowing Volodia Rukhimovich by name.

He is the son of the former People's Commissar. He married Elena Bubnov, didn't he, the daughter of former People's Commissar for Education Bubnov?"

"That's right. Well, this Alexei is a good friend of theirs and Erik knows him from visiting their house."

"Who is he?"

"He says he is the son of the former director of one of the Donbass mines, also the son of an enemy. . . ."

It went slowly and love punctuated the conversation, love that took no more out of me than moving a chair, but by morning I knew, although Tatiana did not know, that Alexei was the *agent provocateur* working on the case and that he had done a good job so far. He had persuaded one or two of the group that it would be possible to assassinate Stalin without being discovered. He would provide the weapons necessary for the attempt, and he would organize the details. What crazy dupes some people can make of themselves!

I expressed great interest in meeting this Alexei at Volodia Rukhimovich's place. But something inside me asserted itself almost unbidden, and I said to Tatiana:

"Just to see him, you understand? For I think he must be a madman and I frankly advise you not to go anywhere near him any more. Keep Erik out of it, if you can, too."

After that things acted themselves out like a play.

Everybody already connected with Alexei, or who had heard him talk in those closed sessions at Volodia Rukhimovich's, was already guilty of a crime in that no one had reported him to the NKGB. They could all be arrested for this omission alone, but bigger things were being planned.

I joined the group and went to drink vodka at Volodia Rukhimovich's and listen to Alexei Smirnov.

He looked like a fanatic. He seemed to be permanently on the verge of giving vent to passionate outbursts of fury, like a boiling kettle of which the trembling lid threatens to pop off. His dark hair, long, thick and unruly, seemed almost unreal; there was so much of it, it was like a head-dress, and its jungle darkness showed off the extreme pallor of his long, gaunt features and wide brow. His lips were pressed together in a thin line when he was silent, the muscles of his jaw worked rhythmically and his slightly protuberant eyes harbored a crafty look. But when he spoke his face was like a catalogue of histrionic expressions and

gambits. The compressed mouth implored, denounced, insulted, became as mobile as that of a chimpanzee. Thunderous eyebrows clamped down over slit eyes and the thin wings of his nostrils quivered in ineffable indignation. Here was a man truly happy in his profession, I thought.

He talked perpetually in a hoarse whisper and with terrific conviction. There were only a few people there, most of them habitués of these meetings. But I saw quite clearly that only about half of them thought of taking Alexei seriously. Still, they were friends of Volodia Rukhimovich and of his wife and the others so they continued to humor him, a little uneasily, but there was nothing else they could do that would not hurt Volodia and Elena since they had introduced him and had not denounced him. Now things had got to the pitch where Alexei insisted on having me vouched for by the others before shaking my hand. This too was just acting, of course. It did not matter to him if anyone belatedly thought to denounce him at this stage because that person would be neatly detained until his work had been completed. This produced its impression. He talked, or rather whispered, a great deal about the betrayal of the workers by Stalin, the illicit comforts and luxuries enjoyed by leaders of party committees, industries and so forth, and of their oppression of the poor. He said that with Stalin dead there would be a chance for the old ideals to flame back to a great light that would illuminate our lives for the rest of our days. As I listened I felt that, had I not known what his true function was, I would probably have believed in his sincerity and would not have endorsed his comments only because I am not of a romantic frame of mind.

"I have long-range pistols," he hissed, "and sufficient armor-piercing ammunition for the job. When the day comes I shall need one man to help me on the spot and two others to stand by. Who is with me?"

Volodia Rukhimovich instantly said that he would be ready for whatever would be needed, and Erik, who had come in later but said nothing to me, volunteered too. I said I would be the third man, because I clearly had to accompany the thing to the end.

Afterwards I made my full report to Sverdlov and told him what I thought.

"Colonel Krainov's man has gone very far. There seems

to be practically nothing I can do to advance the case at all except do as he tells me."

Sverdlov thought for a minute, biting his nails.

"I didn't think he had got so far," he said. "But in any event he cannot look after everybody. If he gets the central figures there must still be those on the fringe. The picture is not too bright, but you had better carry on with Tatiana and her friends."

It was then around the middle of April, 1944, and I had understood that Alexei Smirnov planned the "assassination" for May the first, so I had very little time left for a task that was by no means too clear. I took Tatiana out and together with her visited Svetlana almost every night. Svetlana encouraged us and praised her friend to me in such a way, so needlessly and so often, that is, that I began to see that what she really meant to say, but could not, was "What do you think of me?" When alone with Svetlana, during the short moments that this occurred, I played my hunch and pretended to be a little tired of Tatiana and desirous of switching my attentions to herself. She took the bait like a hungry trout. It pleased her to feel that she had an ascendancy over her friend. It was easy afterwards to arrange a meeting with her without Tatiana being aware of it.

Having taken my stand, as it were, beside Volodia Rukhimovich and Erik, I tried to convey to her an enthusiasm for the project, though I was fully aware of its chances of failing. To my surprise I found that she shared my supposed enthusiasm to a far greater degree than I had previously thought to be the case. As soon as she was sure that I was sincere, she began to speak with a passion of which Tatiana would have been incapable.

"Now you are really in the group and Koba only has a few days to live," she said, using Stalin's earlier name. "I want to tell you something, though, something very strange." I could see that she was so intoxicated with a deep vengeful pleasure at the idea of Stalin having only a few days to live, that this in itself had led her to believe in a plan which, had she been dispassionate, I am sure she would have rejected.

"Sergo Ordjonikidze was a great friend of our family. He had known Mother and Father for years and had been close with Father in everything. One day I remember him coming to the house when Father was not at home and he seemed

very excited. I was little more than a child then and he kissed me on both cheeks as he always had done. He was Uncle Sergo. Then he gave Mother a packet of papers wrapped in a waterproof envelope. 'Keep this for me, until I come to fetch it,' he said. 'And if I don't come back, hide it.' It was during the time of Yezhov and my mother was nervous. When she heard this from Uncle Sergo she asked him what he meant. He said, 'I am to dine with Koba tonight and it is possible that I shall not come back.' There was no doubt what he meant when he said that, more by the way he said it, resigned and calm, than by what he actually said.

"We have those papers still, because Uncle Sergo never came back. That night he died."

This was news of terrific importance.

"Where are they?" I could not refrain from asking.

Svetlana laughed.

"In this house," she said.

I had to report all this to Sverdlov. He was extremely pleased. Next day he told me that I should not show up at the appointed time for the attempt to be made by Alexei Smirnov and that I should advise the others of a call to military duty that prevented me from doing so. We could presume that Alexei knew nothing of those papers since he was not intimate enough with Svetlana. Their discovery would be worth more than the whole provocation engineered by Colonel Krainov.

As ordered, I was absent on May the first, but this is what happened.

After the parades Alexei and Volodia Rukhimovich stationed themselves at Vorobievskie Hills alley where, according to Alexei, Stalin's Packard would pass by. Both were armed, but the bullets in the pistols of both were duds. Two other friends of Volodia's stood nearby to receive and dispose of the pistols after the shooting. The street was practically deserted. The Packard came by, preceded and followed by a Lincoln as usual. But Stalin was not in it. The moment that Alexei pulled his pistol out of his pocket the cars stopped, a posse of *tchekists* emerged and another group converged on all sides forming a cordon around the area. Volodia was arrested with a pistol in his pocket and, after an hour with the interrogators, confessed to the entire fantastic scheme. Simultaneously Litkins himself led a

search of Svetlana's house to find the Ordjonikidze papers. As a result of Volodia Rukhimovich's testimony and within a matter of days Elena and Volodia Rukhimovich and Svetlana's mother were arrested and sentenced to be shot. Erik Korkmasov, Svetlana and one or two others were arrested as well and sentenced to fifteen years' hard labor. Nothing was done to Tatiana. Sverdlov said this was because she was my mistress, but who knows?

But it was Shura I wanted, and when I asked Major Kulagin he told me her group had not yet been picked up and brought back. The Ordjonikidze papers had been found, Sverdlov told me, but I never heard what happened to them. Perhaps they were simply burned.

Whatever happened to them, they were felt to be so hot, and to contain such dangerous secrets, that they were delivered intact to Beria, and both Litkins and Commissar of State Security Fedotov received the Order of Lenin for their discovery.

SIXTEEN

THE END OF SHURA

THE EPISODE was finished and I preferred to think as little as possible about it. But to my dismay I continued to get orders from Sverdlov of the Second Section, instead of from the Fourth Section, to which I wished to return and do a man's work. There was provocation after provocation, investigation after investigation and I introduced myself into the private lives of so many people and so intimately that, were it not for the fact that my memory is as trained as it is, I would by now have become utterly confused with the mass of my recollections. The importance that this phase holds, however, is of a different category and I shall not deal with it here.

Let me say first that Shura returned and we were together again as we had been before. But there was something that prevented me being happy with her as I had been before, although I still desired her and loved her more than ever. It was not easily recognizable but in the end I came to realize what it was. It was the knowledge that I was deceiving her, and that as often as occasion demanded. Perhaps she deceived me, too, but that did not matter, somehow, so much as it should. And perhaps after all she never did deceive me. I enjoyed her as I had always done, but there was something missing which had not been missing before. Perhaps I would have felt better if she had not trusted me, but she did. The feeling is difficult to convey; perhaps I never recognized it clearly enough for what it was, and perhaps I simply did not get enough sleep at that time. Whatever it was, it seemed to me that the stanchions of my conscience had turned from steel to water and they no longer lent that welcome and unquestioned support to my mind. It was a time of reflection, of re-appreciation.

Then Shura went away again. Though her absence hurt, things were easier. I needed to be alone.

Meanwhile Major Kulagin of the Fourth Section showed himself more than normally friendly to me. One day he met me and said:

"By the way, I am leaving Moscow. I shall be the chief of the First Section in Kiev. Come and see me off at the station around seven in the evening the day after tomorrow. Let's meet in the refreshment room."

I expected several people to be there, but I was the only one to see him off. The refreshment room, of course, was crowded and heavy with stale tobacco smoke. Perhaps that is why he chose the place, knowing it would be so, since it is easier to talk without being noticed in a crowd. We sat down close to each other at a little table and Kulagin said we had plenty of time before his train left.

"Anatoli," he said, "I am going to talk to you like a friend. You will help me by just listening. There is no one else I would like to trust.

"This move of mine seems like a promotion to you and my colleagues, but it is not. What is really happening is that I am being exiled from Moscow. And do you know why? Because of my wife. Already things have been arranged in such a way that I do not see her for weeks at a time. She has been officially kidnapped."

We ordered vodka and a side dish before he continued.

"She works in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and is supposed to be on a special job. Not long ago, when she returned from a conference mission in Teheran, she told me that she had been taken by Kabulov, assistant to People's Commissar of NKGB Merkulov. But it had only happened once and it had not changed her towards me. Of course I was angry, terribly angry, but there was nothing I could do. But when she continued to remain absent and unavailable and I knew it was because she was being made use of, I became almost wild. My family life was practically broken already. I had put our little son Sereja to live with my mother-in-law. I went to Sudoplatov and told him what had happened, but he immediately refused to have anything to do with the matter. So then I went to People's Commissar Merkulov himself and asked for a private interview. His secretary came back with Merkulov's refusal to see me and with the suggestion that I interview his deputy, Kabulov. I accepted the suggestion and found that Kabulov, apprised of my visit, had called Sudoplatov and Colonel

Bocharov into the room. They did not deter me. I accused him of what he had done and told him what I thought of him. There was no result to the interview except that I relieved my spirits a little. It was afterwards that Sudoplatov told me that even Kabulov could now do nothing, for my wife, whom I had now not seen for months, had been taken over by someone else. You will never guess by whom."

"Who was it?"

"Molotov."

Kulagin had not much more to tell. He asked me to keep my eyes open and, should I hear anything of his wife Valia, to let him know.

When he boarded his train he extended his hand to me and said very seriously: "Remember, Anatoli, in this world it is a very good thing to have a friend. Believe that I am your friend."

Afterwards, I cannot deny that the doubt flickered in my mind as to whether or not I should report this conversation to Sverdlov. It would be a breach of my oath not to do so, but notwithstanding, I suddenly knew, and with a most welcome sense of certainty, that I would report nothing of it. I liked Kulagin and I was sorry for him. And he wanted to be my friend.

I think I was becoming ill at the time, a little overstrained. My nerves were on edge and I suffered a tiredness and lassitude that I had never known before. There was my official (cover) work that took up a certain amount of time and energy and there was the other work which took up a great deal more in energy and concentration. I slept little and began to be aware of vague longings. It was at this time that I received a letter from Mother to say that she was returning to Moscow with little brother Volodia, who had grown quite tall now.

I went to meet her at the station. The train was already in when I arrived and the passengers had started to get out. I stood patiently near the exit and waited to see mother and Volodia, but they did not appear. Everybody was moving about, only I and a few others were standing still, waiting. Out of the corner of my eye I saw an old woman. There was a moment of incredulous recognition and my blood froze. She was dressed like a beggar, dejected and destitute.

I could not move. It was as if I had been paralyzed. The

old woman approached me and, her eyes wet with tears, touched me lightly on the elbow. Then she spoke.

"Tolya," she said. "Isn't it you, Tolya?"

It was my mother.

I held her in my arms.

"Mother," I said, aghast, "what has become of you? What is this? You are so thin. Where is Volodia?"

"There is Volodia," she said, "bringing our baggage." It was a single brown paper parcel.

I ran to meet my little brother and embraced him. He smiled and kissed me, but he had forgotten little things about me and did not know me as I knew him. He was hungry.

Poor mother, she was coming back to live in that miserable hovel where she had lived before leaving Moscow. It was better there than where she had since lived, and conditions were more normal in Moscow. She was not ill, but she needed food, clothes and rest and her eyesight was extremely poor. I could give her money that would be worth something in Moscow where shortages were not so bad as in the Urals, and Volodia would have to help her about the house.

I saw mother pottering with bent back about the room, dusting the old furniture with a bit of rag, noticing the boarded windows and saying we must get glass put in as soon as possible; and I remembered the young woman, fair, confident and radiant, whom I had watched dancing and laughing not a dozen years before.

I went out with Volodia to an NKVD store and bought an armful of potatoes and vegetables and sausage meat.

"Do you still like sweet bread, Volodia?" I asked.

"I think so, Tolya," he said. "We haven't had any since we left Moscow."

"Then we shall buy some." And we went into the confectioner's section. His eyes popped at the sight of such quantities of provisions there.

As we came out I asked him:

"Didn't they give you lunch at school? You are so thin."

"Oh, yes. They gave us soup at midday and sometimes tea and bread in the evening."

"And did you eat at home before and after school hours?"

"Almost always."

"And did Mother eat at home, too?"

"Sometimes."

Sometimes! If they gave Volodia soup at lunch time that is probably what they gave Mother at the factory. There was no food to be bought with all the money she earned or received from me.

"What were they teaching you at school?" I asked him.

"Oh, arithmetic, geography, botany, grammar, the history of the Revolution—all the usual things."

"And did they treat you all right?"

"Almost the same as the others," he said.

"How do you mean?"

"Well, after all, Father was an enemy of the people, wasn't he?"

"I don't think he was, Volodia," I said. "Doesn't Mother ever speak to you about that?"

"No. She never talks about it."

She is probably very wise, I thought. Who knows what they might not get out of the poor kid at school.

"I will tell you about it one day, Volodia. Your father was a good man, but unfortunate."

He was my only living brother; he must know the truth.

It was about three days after this that I received a message to report to the Fourth Section from which I was still on loan to the Second. Good, I thought. This business is coming to an end at last and I can get back to the work I was trained for. I was sure that I would be told to report for duty somewhere under the Fourth Section and the relief I felt at the thought was like a tonic. But no. It was nothing of the sort. I went prepared and hoping for good news only to get the worst news I could have had at the time.

I was received by Major Kulagin's successor, Lieutenant-Colonel Guliaev. He treated me with an odd formality.

"You will understand that we do not usually do this sort of thing," he said expressionlessly. "We are not normally obliged to tell anyone, even the next of kin until it is convenient."

"What is it?"

"Shura Rudenko is dead." His eyes bored into mine shrewdly. I knew he was interested to see how I took the shock.

I said nothing. News like this sets off a small explosion in the mind and impressions and recollections whirl in con-

fusion. They have to settle first before the full impact of grief is felt.

"She died heroically," the man went on, "at the hands of the enemy. Her conduct in the face of death was exemplary."

Words, words and printed phrases. I noticed the man was trying not to play with the pencil that lay on the desk under his hands.

"I thought you should be informed because I understand you were very attached to her."

"Thank you, Comrade Lieutenant-Colonel," I said. "How did she die?"

"She was hanged." He looked steadily at me.

"The Germans captured her alive, then?"

"The report says that when she was led to the gibbet she walked alone and did not need support. She looked straight at the people watching and smiled. She was not afraid."

"She was never afraid," I said.

She was never afraid, but her beautiful face must have become horribly changed at the slow encroachment of the choking, hanging death and her slim young body must have stiffened hard on the end of the rope before they cut her down and put her out of sight. They sometimes left hanged partisans for days, turning gently with the breeze.

"How long did they keep her before she was hanged?" I asked.

"Five days."

"The bastards!"

There could be little doubt what they had done with her before they hanged her; such a beautiful girl. There could be no doubt at all. My Shura!

I stood up and shook the lieutenant-colonel's hand. There was no more to be said, and I began to feel the need of fresh air, of movement, of something.

But grief had begun to take possession of my mind, like a wave that starts unseen somewhere and arrives suddenly and unexpectedly to engulf one. As I walked slowly down the street, not caring where I was going, the tears came freely to my eyes, though I know my face did not move. It remained expressionless as the hot tears coursed down my cheeks and into my collar. There was a pain in my head as though the pressure of blood in my brain would burst its vessels. I felt incapable of effort, bereft of strength for the

small tasks that were my duty, and at the same time I felt possessed of an enormous, devastating capacity for murder, for revenge.

I went to my apartment and sat down. There was an NKVD orderly there cleaning the place out.

"Get out," I said.

"Yes, comrade captain, I am just finishing the . . ."

"Get out!" I shouted, and he left me in peace.

My emotions took charge of me and I did not try to restrain them. Sitting there and letting my thoughts wander where they would, I was soon exhausted although I had not moved a finger. I pulled off my boots, went to the bed and slept for several hours.

SEVENTEEN

UNHOLY INFILTRATION

I WAS awakened by the strident ringing of the telephone. At the other end of the line State Security Lieutenant-Colonel Sverdlov's voice ordered me abruptly to report to him at once. I was suddenly furious with this sadistic man. I knew what he was up to. I was sure that he had heard about Shura's death and now he wanted to see for himself how I was allowing this to affect my self-control. But I hurried over as ordered, wondering how long I would have to suffer under the command of such a man, as I would surely be driven half crazy before long.

He sat with the rigid immobility of a corpse and only his bright, staring eyes seemed alive as I stood stiffly to attention before him. This man was fanatically ambitious and loved power for its own sake. It would not have been in character for him to have asked me to sit down, and he did not do so while this interview lasted.

"I am going to put a proposition to you, Shishkin," he said. "But first you must listen carefully to what I have to say, otherwise you will not understand the full import of the proposition and will be unable to give it proper consideration.

"As you well know, the total abolition of the Church and its activities, the complete elimination, in fact, of all religious superstition is an inseparable part of Communist Party doctrine. The recent lifting of certain restrictions on Church activities and religious observances in no way alters this. What we have seen is simply a tactical maneuver, a temporary concession made by Comrade Stalin to the American, Roosevelt, in exchange for military supplies. Now, since one of the duties of the Second Department of the NKGB is to keep the clergy and the various religious groups under surveillance, the practical significance of the

religious 'amnesty' is that we must increase our watchfulness and our measure of control correspondingly.

"As long as tactical considerations compel us to keep the Church alive, our aim must be to control it absolutely. Once this has been done we shall be in a position to convert what is now a useless irritant into a valuable tool that can be made to serve us in two distinct ways, as I shall explain to you.

"To those of us who can easily see the absurdity of all religious beliefs, and who know how the Church was used for centuries in capitalist and feudal countries simply to preserve the wealth of the rich by making the poor content to endure their poverty, it is surprising that religious superstition is as widespread as it is, even in our own country. It seems fantastic that anyone could be naive enough to believe it when a rich and well-fed clergy tells him that only by being poor and humble can he ever hope to go to heaven. Yet many people are just so; they go home with the clergy words dinning in their ears and console themselves in their poverty with the thought that only they, and not their rich masters, will gain the rich reward of eternal life in their imagined heaven. This means that a religious man will believe anything that is told to him by a man wearing a soutane.

"The logical implications of this are that we must make sure that the right people wear the soutanes. There is only one way to do this—by secret infiltration. Other methods have not been successful. The clergy who have now been released from prison camps to rejoin their Church have all signed guarantees of allegiance to the Organs of State Security, but none of them is to be relied upon. There is only one method that will guarantee success.

"Now the advantages to be gained by complete control of the National Church are immediately evident and do not need elaborating on. But I spoke of two distinct benefits of which this is only the first. The second involves the Orthodox Church abroad.

"There is a Russian Orthodox Church and community in almost every western country and in many eastern ones as well. In each case the membership consists of Russian emigrants who fled the country before the revolution, the Whites who ran during the revolution and civil war, and their foreign-born children. Many of the membership have

never been to Russia and, although their parents fled the country, as Russians they are proud of their race. When the war against Germany is won, Soviet power and prestige will increase tremendously and it will become easy to get all these foreign establishments to accept our Church as their mother Church and the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia as their head. You do not need me to tell you what means would then become available to us to increase our power and influence abroad.

"So, to sum up, *tchekists* must be selected to be trained and ordained as priests of the Church. Every new cleric will be first and foremost a *tchekist* and eventually every clergyman, from the Patriarch himself to the remotest provincial priest, will be a *tchekist*.

"That is what I propose to you: that you should become a holy father. Think it over."

Still standing to attention, I remained silent. Misinterpreting my silence Sverdlov laughed drily.

"Perhaps you are worried by some of the less congenial aspects of a priest's life," he suggested. "You need not worry. As long as you are generally believed to be celibate you can be as licentious as you like. Every reasonable assistance will be given to you so that you can amuse yourself sufficiently, but with the necessary discretion and secrecy."

I was then dismissed to consider the proposition. But I had no intention of accepting it and was afraid that I was certainly not expected to refuse. Given the choice, I would not accept the proposition; but would my refusal close the matter as far as I was concerned or would this dangerous man Sverdlov construe it as a manifestation of the "wrong attitude" on my part and bring pressure to bear?

While this was happening to me, American and other western visitors to Moscow returned home to write in the papers of "a change in Russia." They wrote in praise of the Soviet Government and described its change of heart. Glibly and impetuously mistaking shadow for substance they wrote of the new religious freedom as though it must be genuine. They saw good omens in the most superficial changes. The introduction of officers' tabs in the army meant recognition of a middle class; the abolition of Political Commissars meant more democratic government; segregation of the sexes at school meant a welcome reversion to traditional

morality; etc., etc. Old illusions were replaced by new illusions, always more favorable to the Soviet Government. Everything was made to show that the Soviet Union was becoming more and more democratic and that it would not be long before a Russian and an American would each understand the same thing on hearing the word "democracy."

The greatest tyrant in history became known affectionately as "Uncle Joe." In the image made of him for the western public this utterly ruthless, cruel, coldly vindictive, insatiably ambitious man was made to look like a wise and kindly old grandfather of Russia, a simple man who would much rather be picking cherries than plotting conquest. A western goodwill towards Stalin and his government was built up almost gratuitously and this was cleverly fastened onto and exploited to the full. With his quiet, feline smile Stalin cheated the West at every turn—and got away with it.

The shadows that Stalin cast on the wall for his visitors to see, and the real achievements of the Soviet Army in the field, combined with an almost total lack of western military and political intelligence regarding the Soviet Union resulted in this aura of goodwill, a goodwill that was entirely one-sided. For western eyes the Red star of Communism took on a rosy hue and the time was ripe for Stalin to pull off the biggest confidence trick in history.

For myself, at this time, I felt bludgeoned by the double impact of Shura's death and Sverdlov's ugly proposition. I felt that something within me was in danger of snapping, and therefore I must be doubly certain to be in complete control of myself at all times. A *tchekist* is expected to have nerves of steel and a system that will withstand any shock and remain unmoved. Only men of such calibre, according to the Soviet philosophy, can protect the regime from its enemies both abroad and at home.

PART THREE

THE FUGITIVE

ONE

THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING

I AWAKENED and lay still. In my mind was a question: what was the meaning of my life?

Where was I headed? Once I had been happy, had been secure, had fulfilled myself without giving a thought to fulfillment. Where was all that now?

I had become an informer, a killer, a male prostitute—and for what? For the greater power and glory of Soviet communism! For the greater and ultimate good. But could any good really result from such a debasement of the self? I suddenly could believe it no longer. More, I felt a revulsion from the fact that such standards could be allowed to exist.

In my own country my true being found no intrinsic value, my life was not worth a kopec for itself, my individuality was a dangerous thing, indeed my own worst enemy. It was only my function that mattered.

Why had I allowed this to happen to me? Because I could not avoid it. Because of the terror, the terror that is predominant or dormant in every Soviet mind. The terror of brutality; of hunger; of being turned against, of being crushed, snuffed out. I had submerged my desire for fulfillment, my love of almost any single thing for its own sake, decency, truthfulness, kindness, even the common urge to procreate, because of the terror. My strength had been my animal instinct for survival. Had it been worth it? I knew then one man, and only one, who would have said that it was not worth it, and meant it. That was Gorodetsky, of cell number 245 in Butirki Prison. Gorodetsky knew what the others had not the courage to know: that

it is better, cleaner, saner to be destroyed physically than to be destroyed mentally and continue to live as a travesty of a man. But Gorodietsky was surely dead, and in Russia anyone who believed, like him, in the individual dignity of the human being would find no place to live.

I was a changed man and saw it clearly now. The news of Shura's death had ripped away the veil.

After my father's disappearance the advent of Shura Rudenko was the most important and consequential single thing that had happened to me in my life. The circumstances in themselves did not justify that, but her death left a vacuum in me, which now sucked in all that I had suppressed and gave it articulation. Why should this have happened when she died? I have wondered if it was because Shura was such an exceptional person, as there is no doubt that she was for me, or whether, without knowing it, I had given her more than she had me. I am not a philosopher and have difficulty in expressing certain things, but it has seemed to me at times that a man must give himself to something, must commit himself, deliver himself up, and I think I had done this in my mind to Shura. She had been a woman for me, yes. But she had been much more than a woman. She had become a symbol and I could not tell for sure whether that symbolic quality was hers from the beginning or whether I had given it to her. How would I have felt about it at the time I heard of her death, I wonder, if I had had a god?

The news of her death cut the continuity of my life like a guillotine. It was as if I had been two men, the man who was until the news was spoken, and the man who later arose with dry eyes from several hours' sleep in the middle of the day with the leaden knowledge that a terrible thing had befallen him.

I have not known fear since then, although I have known danger and disappointment. I have not known fear because I have not cared. I have never sought death, but I am not afraid of it. But while I live, life must have meaning. It was no decision reached by intellectual means, but from then on I would do nothing unless I believed in it and unless it meant something or would mean something in the end.

When I woke up, stretched out on my bed in the quiet apartment, I had something in my mind which had never been there before. While I slept I had become an enemy of

the Soviet Government. There was a smouldering hatred in my heart, deep and secret like an incipient fire in the hold of a ship. The Germans had killed Shura, and they had raped her and abused her. It was horrible, but how could I hate them for it without hating my own people when I knew too well that the NKVD interrogators of the Red Army would have done the same if they had caught a woman partisan from the German side? Perhaps they would have done worse things, since rapings and beatings and liquidations were common enough treatment for people of their own country and blood. But the fire of hatred was alight and it was fueled by hatred for that cruel thing that was the cause of all the suffering I had seen, the Communist government.

I must get out. I must get out and turn back to fight against this horrid, oppressive might; fight where there would be a chance of success. Any means that would serve that end would be mine, nothing would stop me. A link of the chain had snapped.

There was one way that was open to me. I must get back on active duty with the Fourth Section and then, on a mission behind the German lines, really give myself up. Tell them all I knew, apprise them of the plans I knew the Soviet Union had concerning infiltration into the western allied countries so that the Germans would have solid material with which to attract America, England and France to a separate armistice. Then I would go over to them. What of Volodia and Mother? With luck the Soviet Government would not know for some time of my true desertion and reprisals would be delayed. Besides, they would take no reprisals on Volodia because he was still too young. Mother would have to suffer more, but that must not stop me. Such things had been thought of to stop people from doing what I wanted to do. I must not allow it to stop me.

I went to the ballet that night at the Bolshoi Theater, but I cannot even remember what I saw. So as not to arouse suspicion I went with Serafima Prokhorova, the subject I was at the time working on for the Second Section. In the course of the provocation she had become my mistress, my hungry, despised and hated mistress, though I smiled at her when she expected it, caressed her and treated her to the thing she so much desired.

Next day, at nine in the morning, I went round to the

headquarters of the Fourth Section and presented myself for an interview with Commissar of State Security Sudoplatov. The request caused a little stir and I was kept waiting a few minutes while the secretary went in to find out what he should do. Soon he came back and said that I would have to speak first to Colonel Bocharov, chief of Sudoplatov's secretariat.

I was ushered into another room and saluted Colonel Bocharov who sat still behind his desk.

"I understand you want to see Commissar Sudoplatov," said Bocharov questioningly. "May I ask what about?"

"It is a personal question, Comrade Colonel," I ventured. "I must ask to be allowed to see him privately."

Bocharov frowned.

"The Commissar is a very busy man. If you have personal business to discuss I advise you to put it to me. I will respect your confidence, but the Commissar must not be bothered unnecessarily."

I wondered for a second how to begin.

"I wish to make a request for retransfer back to the Fourth Section, Comrade Colonel," I said.

The colonel raised his eyebrows.

"And do you have to see the Commissar for a thing like that?" he asked.

"Not normally," I said. "But I wish to request that the transfer be made urgently."

"Why urgently?"

"Because the work I am now doing is not a man's work and I am sickening at it. It is wearing me down and I want to get back to the work I have been trained for as soon as possible."

"Put in your request in writing today," the colonel said. "And I will let you know how you stand tomorrow."

He looked at me strangely as I saluted and went out.

I did as requested and next day was called in to see Sverdlov, the last person I wanted to see.

He received me with an exaggerated pantomime of courtesy, bowing to me slightly and waving me to a chair. I remained standing, however.

"So?" he said. "The great Captain Granovsky does not consider that the Second Section is the place for him? He does not think he is doing a man's work? What is his definition of a man's work, I wonder? To go slack by himself

under no supervision? Please forgive us if we disagree with you."

I remained silent.

"Please forgive Commissar Sudoplatov, Comrade Granovsky, because he has been unable to grant your request. I am afraid there is no other way for you except to continue obeying orders, my orders." And his manner changed from bantering sarcasm to tight-lipped anger. "You may go now, and if I hear any more of this nonsense I will see that you are properly punished."

The legal and official way would not serve me, then.

I returned to my work and the following day tendered a report to Sverdlov that was so complete and long that he thought I was thoroughly repentant of my lapse in discipline and was only too eager to make up for it. It was December 4, 1944.

TWO

MY FIRST DESERTION

THAT NIGHT I took a train for Minsk. I knew what I was doing. If I were caught and brought back I would face a charge of having abandoned my duties, but that would be the only charge, and I might conceivably be able to plead an overwrought nervous condition in extenuation. I did not attempt to falsify any documents or even provide myself with a ticket. I acted as a man on the verge of madness or nervous disorder might be expected to act. It must look as though I had jumped onto the train in obedience to a sudden impulse.

There was no difficulty boarding the train at the crowded station. I was just another army officer going to rejoin his unit. My documents as a captain of State Security made my admittance to the platform a matter of course for the guard at the entrance, and once aboard the train I made my way to what is called a "soft" coach and took a place there. Just as the train was moving off, a lieutenant-colonel of supply troops approached me with a ticket in his hand.

"I think you are mistaken with the number of your seat, Comrade Captain," he said, extending the ticket. "Number eleven is mine."

"Can I have misread . . . ?" I muttered, reaching in my inside pocket for the ticket I pretended to have. I meticulously searched through my wallet and all my other pockets for the non-existent ticket, putting up a show of annoyance the while at this trying circumstance of having misplaced so important a thing. All the while the train was gathering speed. At last I stood up in some confusion and gave the lieutenant-colonel my place.

"I seem to have lost my ticket," I said.

"That is bad luck," said the lieutenant-colonel. "But no doubt you still have your movement order?"

"Apparently not," I said ruefully. "I remember having that and the ticket together and now I can't find either."

"Then you're in for a little trouble," said the lieutenant-colonel indifferently, settling himself comfortably in his berth.

I went off looking worried, to look for the NKGB operative unit.

I found their compartment and went in. There were four bunks in it neatly made up with clean bed linen and in the middle a table on which was a bottle of vodka and a plate with a sausage on it. Two men sat there, one a lieutenant and the other wearing a sheepskin coat that covered his rank insignia. They stood up as I entered and saluted my senior rank.

"What can we do for you, Comrade Captain?" asked the lieutenant.

I produced my documents identifying me as a captain of State Security and showed them to the lieutenant.

"I am on my way to Minsk," I said. "But I have had a mishap with my ticket and movement order. I have lost them."

"That is unfortunate, Comrade Captain. We have orders to arrest anyone found without a movement order, but you are a colleague and a senior officer. We must see what we can do. What was the number of your place? Can you remember?"

"I thought it was number eleven in the 'soft' coach, but it is not, as that one is occupied."

The lieutenant turned to his assistant and told him to go and see if there were any vacant places in the soft coach. "If not," he said, "check all the tickets." He smiled at me as the other left the compartment.

"Please sit down, Comrade Captain," he said. "Perhaps you will accept a glass of vodka?"

As I drank the vodka I wondered what I would do when the man came back to say that there were no vacant places and all the tickets checked. I had not the slightest idea what I could do, and the thought did occur to me for an instant that perhaps I was mad to take such blatant risks. But I was not apprehensive, I just waited to see what would happen.

The man returned.

"You must have made a mistake, Comrade Captain," he

said. "Numbers thirteen and fourteen are both vacant. Eleven belongs to a lieutenant-colonel of supply troops."

"One of them must be yours," said the lieutenant. "I am afraid I cannot permit you to go to it because, after all, orders are orders, and you have no movement order. But it will be quite as comfortable for you here. You understand my position?" He was fully satisfied, or almost so, that I had been speaking the truth.

"Provided we are satisfied that everything is in order when we get to Minsk we will let you go and, as one *tchekist* to another, I can promise you that this will remain between us."

I thanked him for his comradeliness.

"Where are you going to report in Minsk?" the lieutenant asked.

I told him the truth.

"I am going to report to Colonel of State Security Fyodorov," I said.

"Ah, yes. Well, when we arrive I will get in touch with him. Just a formality, you understand, and then you can be released. Meanwhile," he laughed and refilled my glass, "you must remain our prisoner."

"To a pleasant imprisonment." I called the toast and we all laughed.

Colonel Fyodorov had recommended me for the NKVD espionage school and was now in Minsk. My plan, such as it was, was to ask him to get me transferred to active penetration work and rely on his power and his belief in my aptitude for the work to get the thing through. He knew me personally, I think he liked me, and, with a little luck, all should go well. Of course, I would have deserted my duties, but there would be an element of gallantry in it which is appreciated by all countries at war: I would be deserting the safe in order to join the dangerous.

We had quite a pleasant journey and arrived at Minsk at around ten o'clock the following morning. The lieutenant, who had introduced himself as Glazunov, led me out onto the platform and together we walked over to a telephone booth. It was an old-fashioned thing with a handle to call the operator, of whom one had to ask the number. He rang and asked for a connection with the NKVD and when he was through asked for Fyodorov.

"You might be overheard," I whispered to him. "It is best to avoid details."

He nodded in agreement.

He got through to Fyodorov and introduced himself, then I heard him ask:

"Comrade Colonel, may I ask a question? Are you acquainted with a Captain Granovsky, of State Security?" There was a slight pause and he went on, "He is here with me at the Minsk railroad station. He had better give you the details himself. One moment, please."

Glazunov handed me the receiver.

"Good morning, Comrade Colonel," I said.

"What are you doing here, Granovsky? Why haven't you come to report to me at once?"

"Dmitri Fyodorovich," I answered, "I find I am a prisoner. Would you be so kind as to send someone to release me from Lieutenant Glazunov's charge, so that he can put his mind at rest?"

"All right," he said. "Put me on to the lieutenant."

Glazunov listened attentively and then said: "Yes, Comrade. Yes, Comrade Colonel. I beg your pardon for any inconvenience caused." And I knew things were all right for the time being. We waited and soon enough another State Security lieutenant arrived and presented himself to Glazunov saying that he had come to escort me to Colonel Fyodorov.

I shook hands with Glazunov and drove through the streets of a bombed-out city with the other officer. Minsk had suffered. Houses and public buildings had been destroyed and the rubble had only partially been cleared away. It was a sad sight.

The NKVD was installed in a three-storied yellow building with the MPVO section, of which Fyodorov was chief, on the second floor.

Fyodorov looked at me with the same expression of wearied impassivity I had known before. He said nothing until the lieutenant had left the room. Then he told me to sit down.

"Perhaps you will explain yourself." He made it sound like a mere suggestion. It was impossible to tell whether he was angry or not.

"Comrade Colonel, I have come to appeal for your help. If you cannot help me I do not know what I shall do. I can-

not endure the cultivation and provocation work of the Second Section any more. I am really sickening from it. I have asked for a retransfer back to the Fourth Section to do the work for which I was trained and for which you recommended me. But my request was refused. I just cannot go on. I felt myself about to go mad, and so I have come to see you. No one in Moscow knows where I am. I had no ticket and no movement order. That is why they held me under surveillance on the train."

His face did not move a muscle, his lazy eyes did not even blink.

"Please, Comrade Colonel," I continued. "This pettifogging and incessant work of trying to incriminate enemies of the people is corroding my mind. I want to do the other work which I have shown I can do, where there is an element of danger, where one can feel proud of what one achieves. I think you will understand me."

"Apart from deserting your post," he asked calmly, "have you committed any other crime?"

"None."

Then, for the first time, he smiled and a twinkle lit his eyes.

"You did not desert your post when we were in Moscow that day of the panic."

I began to feel relieved.

"Neither of us did, Comrade Colonel, but many who did have since been promoted and everyone has forgotten what they did on that day."

"Not everyone," he murmured. "I am prepared to believe that you have acted in good faith and I shall do what I can for you. But you have committed a crime. It may be I can do nothing. Let me think a minute."

We sat in silence for what seemed like an awful time and then he picked up his telephone, called the operator and asked for a Major Zaitsev to be sent in to him. Major Zaitsev was chief of the MPVO headquarters in Minsk. He came in and I listened while Fyodorov told him that I would be working under him until further orders as an inspector attached to headquarters. Before Zaitsev came, he said to me:

"Major Zaitsev will instruct you in your duties. Meanwhile we will see how Moscow reacts to what has happened and I will get in touch with People's Commissar Tsenava regarding the matter."

I could be certain of nothing, yet things had turned out so far better than I had a right to hope for. Fyodorov was prepared to help.

Some time passed and then things took a turn for the worse. I carried out my duties as MPVO inspector under Zaitsev for over a month before I received the summons to report to Colonel Fyodorov.

The colonel was standing by the window when I marched in and saluted.

"They know where you are and how you got here," he began. "They say they are giving you a second chance. You are to go back to Moscow immediately. If you don't go of your own free will I have orders to send you under escort. The choice is up to you."

I did not know what to say. He looked at me seriously and then said very quietly:

"It did not work, my young friend. I did all I could. Believe me, I would help you more if I could. What are you going to do?"

Could I say it?

"I shall go, Comrade Colonel—but not to Moscow."

There was a minute of very pregnant silence.

"I shall reply," said Fyodorov, "that you have decided to return by the first train. In my opinion you do not need an escort. You may go."

I shook his hand and left his office.

THREE

SEVERE AND PITILESS

AGAIN A railroad station, smoky and grimy. Again I was on the move.

I took the train to Brest-Litovsk and there changed for Kiev. Just as before I put myself in the hands of the NKGB men aboard the train. At Brest-Litovsk I was handed over to those aboard the train for Kiev and continued the journey normally. Things could not have run smoother—except for a very unpleasant incident outside the city of Kovel on the way to Kiev.

We were approaching the outskirts of Kovel when there was a sudden sound of gunfire and confused shouting inside the train. The train did not stop and we received the fire from a heavy machine gun for several minutes. The bullets ripped through the walls of the coaches like hail through wet paper and over a dozen people were killed and many more wounded. The screams and moans of pain went on until we got into Kovel and were able to discharge the dead and wounded. I was not even scratched and neither, unfortunately, were the *tchekists* in whose charge I was.

Our attackers, I learned, were a band of *benderovtsi*, Ukrainian nationalist patriots who followed a man called Kriva but known by his *nom de guerre* of Bendera. It was one of these bands that had killed General Vatutin, hero of Stalingrad.

At Kiev the *tchekists*, to whom I had said that I had to report to Major Kulagin, got in touch with him as their colleagues had done with Fyodorov. Kulagin drove down to the station himself to pick me up and greeted me warmly. He drove me to a restaurant opposite the Opera and Ballet Theater and there asked me to tell him how I came to be in Kiev.

I told him everything. Everything, that is, except of my

ultimate intention to escape from the Soviet Union. He listened with something like amazement.

"Are you quite sane?" he asked, and when I said I thought I was he burst out laughing hilariously.

"I really believe," he said finally, "that you are in luck. Yes, I think you stand a very good chance."

"Well, tell me how, comrade," I said impatiently, and he laughed again.

"I will," he said. "We have planned an operation here which has the approval of People's Commissar of the NKGB of the Ukraine Savchenko. In fact he is enthusiastic about it. But we lack one qualified man. You, my friend, might fit the bill very well."

"What is the operation?" I asked, delighted.

"I will tell you in due course. First, People's Commissar Savchenko must be satisfied as to your suitability, in spite of what you have done. If he is satisfied about you then you have nothing to worry about. Quite apart from the position he holds he has terrific influence with Merkulov and even Beria himself, as well as with Nikita Khrushchev here in the Ukraine."

In a much better frame of mind than when I arrived I drove with Kulagin through the main street of Kiev, Kreschatik, to his quarters. Unlike Minsk there was reconstruction work in progress here and the rubble of bombings had been cleared away. There were many gaps in the lines of buildings but there was little slovenly unsightliness. Kulagin lived in a house appropriated for NKVD and NKGB personnel and occupied a four-room apartment there. I stayed there that night, although Kulagin told me it would be better for me not to do that again for the time being at least, as it would not be wise to let it be seen we knew each other too well extra-officially.

A couple of drinks, dinner and a good night's rest did me the world of good. Next day I awakened with the conviction that things would come right in the end. This is a wonderful feeling, even when one knows it is not founded on reason.

Another billet was arranged for me that night and the following day we set out for Lvov in Kulagin's jeep. Savchenko was in Lvov and it would be there that my fate would be sealed, this time, I knew, definitely one way or the other.

We left Kiev at five in the morning, while it was yet dark, and saw the loveliness of the scenery unfold about us as the day dawned a few miles outside the city. The ground was thick with snow but the sun shone, and every dawn when the sun shines is lovely. There were three of us, Kulagin, the driver and myself, all of us with fur caps covering the ears and muffled to the eyes in greatcoats with upturned collars. Danger from the *benderovtsi* was considerable at that time so we carried quite a stock of hand grenades and a small armory of pistols and PPD sub-machine guns. But we did not have to use them. We drove the whole day and at nightfall came to Rovno. There was curfew there and sentries patrolled the streets everywhere. The danger from *benderovtsi* was real, indeed. During the night I heard bursts of machine-gun fire.

Early next morning we were on the road again and by three in the afternoon, without incident, had arrived in Lvov. The jeep was driven straight to a handsome three-storied building near the center of town and here we got out. Kulagin led the way into the house and up a flight of stairs to a door on the first floor. In answer to his knock it was opened by a pleasant-faced young woman who was obviously pleased to see Kulagin.

"Georgi Dmitrievich," she almost cooed, "please come in, and your friend, too. Make yourselves at home. Kolia is not back yet but we will have some tea and wait for him. Do you want a hot bath? But of course you do, you must be tired from your journey, all the way from Kiev." All this without either of us having time to say a word. It was very pleasant.

We both took a hot bath and, by the time we had finished, the woman's husband, Kolia Bakurov, had returned from work. Sitting there sipping tea, engulfed by that wave of well-being that comes after pleasantly tired limbs have been scraped clean and soaked in hot water, I idly admired the furnishings of the apartment. It was no great minister's dwelling, after all, no powerful, rich industrial magnate's home: it was just a middle-class, bourgeois apartment. But what a wonderful place all the same. There was an air about it, a feeling of one object belonging with another, and everything I saw seemed to be of good quality. The design and the sheen of the carpets seemed to show that they were Persian, the austere yet soft crispness of the cut-glass chan-

delier proclaimed that it came from Czechoslovakia, the china tea cups were delicate and finely colored. This was Poland, but was this what ordinary people could enjoy in their homes there? For the present inhabitant the place was a billet; he had nothing more to do with the decorations of the apartment than a fly has with the meat in which it lays its eggs. During the course of conversation I learned that the apartment had been commandeered from a quondam professor of Lvov University, since convicted as a nationalist and an agent of the London Poles. But he had taste, the unfortunate professor!

We slept there that night, Kulagin and I, he in a spare bedroom and I on the sofa in the drawing room. Next day we went to see People's Commissar Savchenko.

We had to wait all day and part of the following morning. Savchenko was busy the whole time with Third Rank Commissar of State Security Voronin and a number of other officers who came and went hurriedly and with a great show of keenness and dedication to duty. Finally, at around three in the morning, Voronin came out, said good night and left. Kulagin then went in to see Savchenko. Half an hour later he opened the door and called to me:

"Captain Granovsky, will you come in?"

Savchenko did not waste any time.

"Major Kulagin has explained your position to me," he said, "and has recommended you for work with us here. You will proceed with him and under his orders to Trans-Carpathian Ukraine and you may consider yourself transferred to the First Section of the NKGB-Ukraine. The official transfer will come through later."

He stopped for a minute, obviously wishing to say something more. He was a tall, slim man with dark hair and a long, narrow, stern face. He sat very upright in his chair behind his great desk.

"Be severe and pitiless with any enemies of the régime," he said. "Be exact and attentive in carrying out your orders and be strictest of all with yourself. Remember that and you should do well. You may go."

He finished abruptly with a curt nod of his head. I saluted and left the room, waiting for Kulagin who emerged a little later.

I was tremendously elated with the success we had had, but with serious faces and cadenced military step we

marched from the building without saying a word. Only when we were some distance away did I permit myself the expression of my feelings by gripping Kulagin firmly by the hand and thanking him for what he had done. He laughed.

"Now we can work together," was all he said. It was February, 1945.

I drew extra clothes and was also issued a set of documents for cover, according to which I was a captain of motorized troops. I put through a telephone call to Moscow and spoke to my mother.

She told me that since I had left she had been driven nearly out of her wits by repeated visits paid her by a Captain Kruppenikov of State Security. First he had merely asked her where I was, then he had interrogated her and finally threatened. All to no avail, of course. When Mother asked where I was I did not tell her but merely said that I was well and that she must not worry. I told her I was sending some money and would do so as often as I could but could not promise a regular remittance. Volodia got up from bed and had a few words with me. He was well, he was studying hard and was going to be a soldier like me! It did me good to hear him.

First of all Kulagin had to make a trip alone deeper into Poland, and I was left in Lvov. The NKGB were masters there and Sovietization was proceeding fast. The Second Section was extremely active and counter-revolutionaries, spies, saboteurs, anybody, in fact, who gave suspicion of resisting the idea of becoming a Soviet citizen rather than remain a Pole, were being routed out and deported to labor camps by the hundreds. To be a Pole at all was virtually a sufficient ground for suspicion. Many of their places were taken by Russians, and the face of the population of Lvov gradually changed. Confiscation of property was continuous and methodical looting had already deprived most households of their valuables. With the heavy rationing imposed on the civilian population, the loss of practically every civil liberty previously enjoyed by them and the ubiquitous show of force, the people became submissive and resigned. It has always been much easier to impose rules on poor men than on rich men.

● Opposite where I was billeted in Copernicus Street there

was the headquarters of the Fifth Section of the Lvov NKGB Section. There, many of the windows had been fitted with the same inverted steel hoods that I had seen in Butirki Prison. It was there that the prisoners were interrogated, that is, beaten into submission. Their screams rent the still air at night and made my sleep restless.

There was of course the Armia Kraiova of brave Polish patriots. But, with their night attacks on sentries, disrupting of certain communications, raids, stabbings and shootings, all they did only amounted to a little harassing. They could not stop what was being done to their country. It was like trying to stop a runaway steamroller with a barricade of empty chocolate boxes.

Kulagin came back, and two days later he, his assistant, Major Vasily Danko, and I set out in our jeep for Uzhgorod, capital of Ruthenia, easternmost province of Czechoslovakia, or as the Russians call it, Trans-Carpathian Ukraine. Each of us had a cover occupation, and Kulagin had even changed his rank (to lieutenant-colonel) and his name (to Maximov).

It was the beginning of spring and as we passed through the town of Sambor and gradually began the ascent of the Carpathian Mountains the sun shone brightly, warming us, while the air remained crisp and fresh. Higher up there was snow on the ground, but it continued warm enough in the sun for us to continue traveling without our great-coats. After Turka we came to the border between the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia. We had dinner and stayed the night with the NKVD border guards.

The border guards paid great respect to Lieutenant-Colonel Maximov and chatted freely with us. Their commanding officer, a lieutenant, complained bitterly of the *benderovtsi*; the more vodka he drank the more bitterly he complained. Actually, he was in fear of death. Every month, it appeared, more than ten border guards were killed by the bands who hid in the hills.

FOUR

ABUSE OF POWER

WE DROVE down the mountain road in bright sunshine, leaving the snow behind and above us. The temperature became steadily warmer and soon we were speeding along a level road lined with tall trees leading into Uzhgorod, principal city of the Trans-Carpathian Ukraine. By a little after noon we had reached our destination, the guarded house in which the Operative Group of the First Department of the NKGB had made its headquarters.

Once we were inside the house and the formalities of introduction had been completed, Kulagin took me upstairs to my new quarters and left me to settle in.

The house was on the outskirts of Uzhgorod and had once belonged to the owner of surrounding vineyards. The owner and his entire family had been branded as capitalists and exploiters of the workers and had been sent off to Siberian labor camps. The house stood on a little height and I could look out onto the center of Uzhgorod, its houses yellow in the sun, interlaced with trees, and the cathedral towering delicately from their midst. Everywhere there was the fragrance of spring verdure and fruit blossoms carried on the crisp mountain air. The whole scene seemed to speak of the goodness of life. No feeling could have been more out of character.

Seven of us, and our soldier orderlies, lived in the house. Apart from Kulagin and myself there were Captain Vakulenko, tall, dark-haired and saturnine, Captain Trusov, short, bow-legged and a hard drinker with a head as unintoxicable as stone, Lieutenant Kusmin, our radio operator, a petulant, ill-tempered boy of little more than twenty, Lieutenant Volosiuk, the cipher specialist, and Major Danko.

We all got on rather well together except for Kusmin, who annoyed some of us by his unnecessarily harsh treat-

ment of the soldier orderlies. On the slightest pretext he would beat up one of them. This sort of thing became quite regular Soviet military procedure after the Finnish war: a superior officer could, if he chose, personally inflict corporal punishment on any of the troops under his command. Generally, however, the practice was discouraged.

Kulagin was not yet in a position to brief me on my new mission, and as I would have to wait a few days to get my orders he told me to hold myself in readiness and, meanwhile, keep my eyes and ears open and observe the work that was being carried out by his Group. For the next few days, therefore, I had plenty of opportunity both to understand the Group's objective as well as to see how they went about the job of achieving it.

Briefly, their objective was to select as large a number as possible of refugee types of non-Soviet nationality, and to evacuate them across the western frontiers into the hands of the Western Allies. In the Trans-Carpathian Ukraine already occupied by Soviet troops there was plenty of material among the Hungarians, Poles, Czechs, Rumanians, Slovaks, Jews, Ruthenians, Ukrainians and Austrians who lived there to serve the purpose admirably. All these people would serve as potential spies, saboteurs and an eventual fifth column. The process was simple. The menfolk of the area had seen enough misery and misfortune to last them a lifetime. For the most part they had either served in German labor battalions, worked their own farms under conditions of extreme hardship or actually seen tough fighting. They were mentally uprooted and willing, for the most part, to take the line of least resistance. Persuading them to co-operate, especially with the methods that the Group used, was seldom difficult. There were quite a few rejects, but not due to refusals to co-operate; they were due to some defect in the individual concerned or in his circumstances. He, or she, was either physically or psychologically unsuitable or could not provide the necessary "guarantees."

Leads on prospects were derived from every kind of source. The prospect was then brought in, screened and interrogated, and either signed up or rejected. All this would be done with the utmost security precautions so that, whatever happened to him, the new agent or reject would never know who it was who had signed him up or sent him

away. Aliases were used wherever names were necessary and sometimes even disguises were worn by members of the group.

The interrogation and screening rooms were crucibles of high drama. However young a person might be at the outset of a "successful" interview, by the end of it he or she would be permanently aged. It was at the climax of the interview, when the trap was sprung and a dreadful decision demanded, that the aging happened, almost tangibly before the eyes. In that moment of truth a man could age a decade. I sat in on many such interviews and well remember the feeling of helplessness that gripped every suitable prospect and even imparted itself to me. I never saw anyone get away with a refusal.

I remember a lovely young Hungarian woman who looked very much like the Hungarian-born actress Zsa-Zsa Gabor. She was brought in with her middle-aged and obviously terrified husband. The special relationship between these two was shrewdly and swiftly appreciated by the interrogator. The woman was the most precious thing in the man's life and he was terrified of anything that might hurt her or make him lose her. He was soon reduced to a state of almost abject submission by the interrogator's calculated remarks about his wife's beauty, the difference in their ages, how lucky he had been to find her, and so forth, with the deliberately implied threat that she would be taken away from him and used for the amusement of the Red conquerors. By the time he was told what was required of him he did not find it too hard to make up his mind, but he looked like a broken man. His wife would not be touched, and he and she would go to the West together. In exchange the Soviet would have his sister as a hostage and his promise to obey every instruction received from Soviet intelligence, wherever he might be.

There was another girl I remember, a Polish girl with the dark and gentle beauty that Polish women sometimes have. She was little more than a child and it was known that she looked after her invalid father to whom she was devoted. The choice put to her was simple. Do what we tell you and your father will be looked after in one of the best sanatoria in Russia; refuse and you will be turned out of your house and left to fend for yourselves in the streets. Her evident shock, her tears and pleas made not the slightest

difference, nor the barest impression on the interrogator, who was already impatient to get on to the next case. She agreed to the proposal and was assigned to Toronto where it was known that her father had relatives.

I saw a tall and husky young Pole almost crumble and shrink before my eyes when he took the decision to sign away his children for the rest of his life. It was known that he had a sister in Detroit and he was told that he would have to make his way to her and settle there to await orders. If he refused, he, his wife and his children would all be forcibly separated from each other for life and he and his wife at least would be consigned to labor camps. If he agreed he would be able to continue living with his wife, but the children would remain behind as hostages, a guarantee of his obedience. They would be well looked after in the Artek pioneer camp in the Crimea, the very place where so many Spanish children were looked after while their mothers and fathers fought against Franco in the Spanish civil war.

Every trick was used, every advantage taken of any circumstance that offered any advantage, however unfair. The decision taken, the candidate would then write out his promise to the NKGB, take the money that was due him and be helped in every way to get to his starting point on western allied territory. His dossier would begin and the West would gain another potential enemy, however reluctant, in its midst. People were wanted who had relatives in any non-Communist country, and there were many who had. Professional or business qualifications were also an advantage. All this tended to make things easier from a technical point of view after the "refugee" had gone over.

Kulagin would personally approve each new agent and then cable his approval, together with all relevant details, to Savchenko for his confirmation. From then on the "refugee" became controlled by a mighty instrument that was itself insulated from him by secrecy of the most absolute kind. This secrecy, and the consequent impersonality of the machine of control, had the effect of paralyzing almost any initiative the agent might still retain after signing on. Even so, as we knew and expected, there were some who would accept the job in the hopes that they would somehow, someday, manage to win out; trick their new masters and end up by having the last laugh. But the chances of such a thing

ever happening were so remote that we did not even bother to try to discourage the hope of it when we saw it revealed by the calm of a man's manner or in the smoothness of his calculatedly ingratiating tone. What, after all, could he do? By reneging on his promise he would condemn to death the hostage kept as a surety of his "good faith," and he would also be unprotected and open to revenge and the persecution of punishment for betrayal that could come at any time and in any of a thousand different ways from agents of the Kremlin. If he sought protection, went to the police of his new country and made a clean breast of everything, he would be repeatedly interrogated, worried and harassed to the limits of his endurance and, at the end of it all, he would risk endless internment or, far worse, deportation. There was very little hope indeed.

The work of the Group was urgent and was carried out with a ruthless contempt for rest and leisure that befitted its urgency. It had to be completed as soon as possible, in any event before the fluid political pattern of Europe began to crystallize. Now, in the early spring of 1945, while the fighting armies were still rolling over the lands of eastern and western Europe, the maximum advantage had to be wrought from our position in the newly conquered territories. The time was ripe now to sow the seeds of future advances. Our agents had to "flee" and "escape" while the world thought that confusion reigned and before the iron curtain could clamp down along the eastern perimeter of western Europe.

FIVE

BRIEFING FOR WEDLOCK

AFTER A few days Kulagin sent for me. He told me to take a seat and, without preamble, came straight to the point. His manner was precise and official.

"Captain Granovsky," he said, "I am now able to give you your orders. You are to be entrusted with a very delicate mission and, as a first step, you are ordered to seduce and marry a certain woman of this town."

I felt the urge to laugh, but did not do so since a Soviet trained NKGB man does not lightly give way to such impulses. Kulagin, it was quite obvious, was not joking.

"The woman," he continued, "is called Margarita Rachkova. She was once a housemaid but she is now the wealthiest woman hereabouts. She owns the best restaurant in Uzhgorod as well as many other properties. To all intents and purposes she is a widow as her husband was recently caught trying to escape and is now in an isolation camp in Siberia. He was a fascist associate of Salaszy and Horthy. Rachkova's personal history is interesting. She is an outright opportunist who has made liberal and profitable use of her body. She has had many lovers of all sorts and has led a gay life, but now she is in a state bordering on depression. She is no longer as young or attractive as she used to be and she feels insecure. She is intelligent enough to know that her property will not remain hers for long but she is unable to come to terms with this new situation. She has been softened by too much comfort, too much money and too much selfishness. She now drinks a great deal and is often drunk all day. She dreams of the past, drowns the present and tries to forget there is a future. If she were to think of the future at all it would be to think of escape; but I am convinced that the mere thought of living through all the privations and indignities of a common refugee would pre-

vent her from ever attempting anything by herself in the normal way.

"Now she will know you not only as a member of the new ruling order but also as a man with some considerable personal power. To judge from her past, this alone should be enough to interest her in you. But if you can arouse her and give her a personal interest not only in you but in your future and welfare, then she will be ready for us to make use of her as we want to. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, Comrade Major," I answered. His tone did not invite me to put the questions I would have liked to put.

"The final object, of course, is to make full use of you," Kulagin continued. "But more of that later. First the means, then the ends. You must marry her, but before you do so you must make quite sure that you dominate her absolutely. You have been adequately trained for this type of mission and should have no difficulty in making her become sexually and morally dependent on you. You must bring her to such a state of willing submission that you will be able to trust her implicitly in and for anything that you ever require to trust her with. I cannot stress the importance of this personal domination too much for, with it, you will be able to operate efficiently; without it, she will be using you while you fancy that you are using her. Either you dominate her surely and completely or she will make a bigger fool of you than a cuckolded husband.

"The idea of marrying you should be quite acceptable to her for it will mean an easy and, in a sense, familiar road to security. Now as soon as you are married—and it should happen as soon as possible—you will suggest to her your joint escape to the West."

"Escape to the West?" I queried, surprised in spite of myself.

"Exactly. You will be in a unique position to prepare the way with money, papers, transport and all sorts of other facilities that will enable you both to short-circuit almost all the hardships and risks of escape. At least, so it will appear and events will be made to bear it out. I have no doubt that she will co-operate with you wholeheartedly.

"Your real work, and the object of all this, as you put it, will be in the United States of America where such a wife will be very useful to you. Of course, you will never tell her of your real motive in "escaping." We will see to it that

when you get there, you will have sufficient funds to set up together in the restaurant business in suitable premises in the city to which we assign you. She will have the sort of activity to which she is already well accustomed and which she knows thoroughly. It should not be difficult for you to keep her happy and make her a useful and unsuspecting partner in your own activities. She will be kept busy with the day-to-day running of the restaurant and you will have time enough to attend to your NKGB work. What better cover could you possibly have than being the proprietor of a restaurant? In such a situation you could contact and instruct your agents—who would simply be customers—under the eyes of even the best police in the world.

"That is the general outline of your objective and as much as you need know to begin with. Further details and instructions will be made known to you in due time and, meanwhile, I will leave it up to you to make contact with Rachkova in whichever way suits you best. There is no need to tell you that things will go badly for you if you fail in this mission, but perhaps I should tell you that they would go badly for me, too, since it was I who recommended you for this American assignment. Any questions?"

The question I felt most inclined to ask was the one that could not be asked. It was "Why me?" But there was another.

"Comrade Major," I said. "Granted the importance of the ultimate objective, could it not be successfully achieved with less complicated preparatory arrangements?"

"No mission ever suffered from good preparation, however complicated. Simplicity in matters of this sort is seldom much of an advantage. A good, solid story has to be built up that will justify, on its own merits, the fact of your going to America. It must not be a simple, glib, straightforward little story or it will fail. It has to be a story that is human and eminently credible. This story will be human and very credible. A less complicated one would almost surely be less so. Anything else?"

I shook my head. "No further questions," I replied.

"Good," said Kulagin, and he smiled for the first time in this interview. "Now I want to give you a few words of friendly advice. I can see that the idea of marrying this woman does not appeal to you; but you are still very young

and two or three years, or even five years, will not mean all that much in the years you have before you. And Rachkova can always be got rid of when she has served her purpose. Meanwhile, though, you will be serving not only the Soviet Union but your own interests as well. You will be advancing your own career. Remember that. One more thing," and here Kulagin laughed aloud. "Be careful when you make contact with this Rachkova. She is not very fond of Russians at this moment."

"I promise to be circumspect," I smiled.

"Good. Now let's have a drink to your success."

SIX

GOVERNOR OF UZHGOROD

WHILE THE successful accomplishment of my mission was to be my primary concern, I was nevertheless to have a full-time job to do at the same time. I was to be the official assistant of Colonel Tulpanov attached to the People's Committee of the City of Uzhgorod.

This same Colonel Tulpanov some years later was right at the center of the biggest headline news of the day for it was he, as Marshal Sokolovsky's right-hand man, who organized the Soviet blockade of Berlin in 1948-1949. He was Marshal Sokolovsky's Political Advisor during the whole affair which, as will be remembered, turned out to be a complete failure for the Communists and a triumph for the West. Not long afterwards, whether by purely natural causes or as a result of his sudden fall into disgrace, Tulpanov died of heart failure.

But now he was in charge of the sovietization of the Sub-Carpathian territory of Czechoslovakia and had been chiefly instrumental in seeing to it that practically everyone in the principal governing body of Trans-Carpathian Ukraine, the *Narodnaia Rada* (People's Parliament), was one of our men. The puppet president of the *Narodnaia Rada* was a man called Ivan Turinitza, a former non-commissioned officer of General Svoboda's Czech army formed in the U.S.S.R.; our man and been chosen by Khrushchev.

I was formally introduced to Tulpanov by Kulagin and was told to move to new quarters. While Colonel Tulpanov was now my chief as far as my day-to-day functions were concerned, Kulagin continued to be the man to whom I would report in all else, especially on my progress with Rachkova.

At the People's Committee the setup was the same as in the *Narodnaia Rada*: almost every member was one of our men. The president of the Committee was Sergei Petrovich

Stasiev, a local man, a Galican of Ukrainian stock, and he now took orders from me. The business of the Committee was to govern the city. It therefore followed that I became, practically speaking, the governor of Uzhgorod.

In the eyes of the world, however, I was simply a captain of motorized troops and no one knew of my belonging to the NKGB, much less that I was a member of the First Department which is concerned with political intelligence.

Our whole objective, as Tulpanov told me, was to get as much popular support for the Soviet régime as possible so that at the right time there would be wholehearted public approval of annexation of the territory. Conditions, as it happened, were somewhat in our favor as the majority of the people in the area had for many years been victims of a mild, though none the less real, racial prejudice. The people, predominantly of Ruthenian and Ukrainian stock, had for generations been treated as natural inferiors by officialdom, first of the Austrian and later of the Czechoslovakian variety. During the war, they were thought of almost as colonials by the Hungarians. It was our business to make the Ruthenians and the Ukrainians even more aware of this than they were already. We, the Soviet liberators, considered them to be our equals, our blood brothers, and we would help them attain the national maturity which all the nationalities of the Soviet Union enjoyed.

By the time I took up my position, and established myself in a fine office with a balcony overlooking the city square of Uzhgorod, Colonel Tulpanov had already gone quite a long way with the first practical method of ingratiating ourselves with the people—the redistribution of private property. Czech landlords were summarily dispossessed and their property, in town and country, was parceled out among the peasants and city dwellers. The division was quite arbitrary and capricious and very temporary. No deeds of ownership were given to the new holders. These, it was said, would come in good time. The local currency, the *pengo*, was systematically inflated by the abundant printing in Moscow of new money which was supplied to Soviet troops in the area and with which local employees of the government were paid. Prices rose steadily every day, but for the right people money in any quantity was always available. People who had never enjoyed authority, but who

had always hankered after it, were sometimes given at least the trappings of it, the nice office, the big desk, the telephone and the high-sounding title, and they enjoyed it. Such people were entertained by us and whereas they had been accustomed to thinking of polite and considerate treatment as something officialdom reserved for Czechs and Hungarians, they were now favored with it themselves. This, more than any other single thing, made the population prepared to treat us as friends.

People complained constantly of the way prices were rising daily, and just as constantly they were informed that the blame lay with the capitalists who were taking advantage of many shortages, perhaps even concealing stocks and creating artificial shortages, so as to get rich quickly at the expense of the masses. It would be all right, we said, and there would be a proper distribution of plentiful supplies of commodities at fair prices within the reach of everyone just as soon as the people could force the Bénes government to accede to incorporation within the Soviet Union.

For those who were ready to talk and whose word carried any weight in any given group there were little ephemeral favors, in return for an important act of collaboration. This is the sort of thing that happened.

A man had been summoned to see me and I deliberately busied myself with other things in order to keep him waiting for two hours. By the time he finally entered my room he was definitely scared. I got up to meet him and led him to an armchair. Taking a seat in front of him, I offered him a cigarette and lit it.

"I have heard that you are offering your workshop for sale, Comrade Fisher. Is it true?"

"I am thinking of it, Comrade," he answered warily.

"And why do you want to sell it?"

"Business is difficult nowadays. Orders are scarce and there is no supply of materials at a reasonable price. It is difficult to get a living out of it."

"And what would you do with the money?"

"I would live with it, my wife and I, until things become more settled."

"Why didn't you come to see me?"

The man was obviously surprised. Why should he come to see me?

"Why should I bother you, Comrade Chief, with my little affairs?"

"Because I am here to help wherever I can, and I am sure I can help you."

He did not answer but waited for me to continue.

"We will buy your workshop, but we ask you not to leave it. Please stay on as the manager. We will pay you a proper salary and see that you get orders. We will rely on you, of course, to be our friend."

The man was more pleased than surprised and thanked me effusively. There and then we opened a bottle of wine to celebrate, after which I got down to some real business with him.

"I would like you to give me a little help in my job now," I said, and pressed the button for my secretary. "I hope you won't mind if it takes an hour or two of your time?"

"But of course not, Comrade. I am at your service."

I saw that my secretary was ready with her pencil and pad and I began to question him, occasionally filling his glass with wine and pressing him to accept the fine cigarettes he so clearly relished. Who were the people he knew? His friends, his enemies and those who were simply acquaintances? Where did they live, and work? What nature of work did they do? How well off were they? What were their political leanings? What had they done under the Nazis? As the man answered the girl took note of everything he said. Nothing that he said for or against anyone would be treated as conclusive, but it would be a lead to work on; something to help choose whom to rely on, whom to assist and whom to deport. The opposition was thus marked out and eliminated before getting a chance to open its collective mouth.

But while I was busy settling into my new job, the thought of my other mission was nonetheless never far from me. Especially in the evening, when I was back in my living quarters, I could scarcely think of anything else, and the more I thought about it the more it appalled me. Kulagin wanted action, and I would have to make a start of some kind soon.

Talking my way around this woman would not, I felt, be difficult. Even though I had never seen her, or even a photograph of her, I felt confident that where it was simply

a matter of talking I would be able to deal with her. But what about the rest? I was expected to seduce her and dominate her physically. What if she turned out to be quite unattractive and even repulsive to me? In spite of all the training I had received from Rasputin I did not feel at all sure that I would so successfully be able to control my own revulsion as to deceive her, not merely once but as many times as necessary, in bed.

And while I worried about these problems that I would so soon have to face I felt mentally suffocated by an intense resentment against the system that imposed such unnatural conduct on a man. I remembered Kulagin's attitude throughout the interview during which he gave me my orders. To him, it was quite clear, my own natural feelings towards this mission had been too unimportant, too irrelevant to merit consideration. The complete elimination of personal feeling, perhaps even the complete elimination of a sense of individual identity, was something that I, as a trained NKGB man, was expected to have achieved. Well, I had not achieved it. I had learned that in the West human beings were not treated as human beings, but were merely the commodity of capitalists. They were units of labor, of productivity, of consumption. What about Soviet man? My own predicament showed me how much our system treated us as human beings. It showed that, whatever was the case in the West, here certainly, under the Soviets, a man was no more than a means to an end—an end that he himself had no voice in determining. All this angered me and I recognized that I was in a dangerous frame of mind and must watch myself carefully if I were to avoid doing myself harm.

It was at this time that I had a very poignant experience. We were at dinner and Colonel Tulpanov and Lieutenant-General Mekhlis, his immediate superior, were both present. Talk was loud and boisterous and the wine flowed freely. Suddenly the General turned to me.

"You, Captain Granovsky," he said. "I used to know a certain Granovsky some years ago when I was editor of newspaper *Pravda*. He held a high place in the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry and then later in the People's Commissariat of Railroad Transportation. It turned out subsequently, however, that he was an enemy of the

people and, of course, had to be liquidated. Are you by any chance a relative of his?"

Everyone was silent at these words, and all eyes focused on me. The General half smiled at me across the table, and I could see that he was enjoying himself. I knew what answer I would have to make and I knew that I would be able to make it, but memories of my father surged into my brain like a hot avalanche and my heart shrunk to renounce a just and upright man who had worked well for an ideal in which he sincerely believed. But I did not allow my face to betray any of this torment. I answered the General quite calmly in the complete hush.

"Yes, Comrade Lieutenant-General, I am. To my disgrace and shame, the man you speak of was my father."

I think my answer came as a shock to everyone at the table. But the General turned to the others and, pointing at me, said: "You see, Comrades; here is a perfect example of what our great leader, Comrade Stalin, has promised. Comrade Stalin, great genius that he is, has said that the child shall not suffer for the deeds of the father. Here is evidence of it. The Captain's father was found to be a rogue and an enemy of the people. He consequently suffered his due punishment at the hands of Soviet justice. Yet today the son of that same man proudly wears the uniform of a Red Army officer and there is no reason why he should not forge a brilliant career for himself."

I suffered both the insults and the back-handed compliment in silence. Of course I was proud to wear the uniform of my country's army; it was a brave army that had proved itself time and again. But I could not bring myself to be proud of what it stood for in the eyes of the people who had to live under our rule.

That night, alone in my room, I availed myself of one of the privileges of my position and tuned my radio in on the BBC in London. I opened my window and smelled the fresh, sweet air while the concert music from London filled the room. Free England. I lay down on my bed and listened, longing that the freedom of the English could be ours too. I wondered if I would ever be in a position to plan a future of my own choosing; stop having things planned and decided for me. Certainly now, in distant England, men were free. But then, for how long would even they be free? For them, too, a Communist future was being planned, a future

in which there was no place for personal freedom in the only meaning of the term that makes sense.

The Kremlin was going to arrange my "escape." But I was suddenly determined that it was I who would arrange my own escape—and it would be a real escape. There would, I knew, be nothing easy about it; and I had no idea even how to begin to prepare for it. But the decision to make the break, arrived at so suddenly and yet with all the force of conviction, was intensely exciting.

SEVEN

BAD RISKS

MARGARITA RACHKOVA'S restaurant was called the Korona. I went there to spy out the land and, if possible, to make contact with Margarita. This proved impossible, however, as she was "not feeling well today." But the following day, when I was out with my batman-driver, he pointed her out to me. It seemed that she was a widely known personality in the town.

She was a tall, blond woman of about forty-five, and definitely attractive. She was expensively and tastefully dressed and walked arm in arm with a very young man. I later asked Kulagin if he knew who the young man was.

"She calls him her nephew," he told me. "But he is nothing of the sort, of course. He is a Hungarian boy called Tibor. Someone she picked up to relieve her boredom. If you like," he added, "we can have him removed."

I thought for a moment and decided against this. From all points of view it was better that Rachkova herself should get rid of the boy in the normal way. It would be more natural. In this mission, though success with Rachkova was the last thing I wanted personally, I could not allow myself to fail through any cause that could be attributed to my fault or my own bad judgment. That would surely land me in Siberia. I must carry on with it as seriously as I knew how, and with a good reason for my every move. I could only hope that something, something which could in no way be laid at my door, would intervene to prevent my actually marrying Margarita. If I were to break free from the Soviet system I could afford no entanglements. Meanwhile I had to watch for the right opportunity to make contact with her.

It came in an unexpected way. I heard that an American lieutenant and a British N.C.O. had been picked up by Soviet troops in the vicinity and were awaiting transporta-

tion to an appropriate repatriation center. They had escaped from a German P.O.W. camp. It occurred to me that I could possibly make use of these two and I therefore obtained Kulagin's consent to let them loose on the town. Kulagin even arranged to provide them with clothes and pocket money and later rang me up to say that I could find them at the Kish restaurant.

It was early in the afternoon and when I walked in they were the only other customers there. I ordered a drink for myself and, seeing that they were looking at me, waved them a greeting. They said something to me in English and I walked over to their table.

"You Americans?" I asked.

"He is," said the Britisher, with a jerk of his thumb. "I'm English." And he motioned for me to sit down.

I spoke no English and they spoke no Russian. But we found we could get along quite well together, each using his own variety of broken German. They were more than willing to talk, and I found myself very glad to listen. Over successive bottles of wine they told me of their capture by the Germans, of their time in the camp, their escape. Then they started telling me about their respective home countries and, at one point, the American asked for pencil and paper and started calculating how much back pay he would get on his return. This was quite amazing to me and I could not at first appreciate that he, as well as the Britisher in fact, would actually be paid for all the time that they had been prisoners of the enemy. It was almost unbelievable, and quite unheard of in the Red Army, where officers and men were encouraged to prefer death to capture. In the Red Army there were punishments, not rewards, for being taken prisoner. Yet I felt that these men were telling me the truth.

Neither Bill, the American, nor Stanley, the Britisher, had done any drinking for several years and they were soon affected by the wine. They gave rein to their good spirits and laughed and sang. I, too, felt infected by their carefree good humor. When I suggested that we move on to another place they both agreed emphatically and, with loud hilarity, we made our way, a little tortuously, to the Korona.

We had not been there more than a few minutes before everyone knew that here were two western soldiers celebrating their escape from a German prison camp. As I ex-

pected, word of the appearance of these two Anglo-Saxons was sent to Rachkova and before long she herself walked into the restaurant. She came over to our table and introduced herself, and I formally invited her to join us. She had an easy manner and was extremely hospitable, but I noticed that she had already had too much to drink. Although she was certainly attractive, this rather disgusted me. She ordered drinks and would not allow anyone to pay. Then Tibor came up and she introduced him as her nephew. He sat down with us but had nothing to say for himself. A small orchestra was playing and soon Margarita danced with each one of us in turn, except Tibor, who remained seated and looking rather petulant through it all. But this did not seem to bother Margarita. She was having a good time and, if anything, Tibor's childishness rather added to her enjoyment. We danced and drank, talked and sang until the early hours of the morning.

Then Tibor began to urge that it was time for them to be going. At first Margarita ignored him but he became more and more insistent and at last she agreed, much to his obvious relief. Before going, however, she made us all promise that we would visit her for tea tomorrow, or more exactly, later the same day.

I had now got what I wanted. I had met Margarita in circumstances that could never be considered suspect and had every excuse for following up this first meeting. Bill and Stanley were due to leave Uzhgorod any day and would in all likelihood not be able to see Margarita again. It did not matter whether they did or not. As far as my mission was concerned they had served their purpose and were of no further use to me. It was up to me now to get rid of them, but somehow I hesitated simply to get up and leave them. The truth was that I had enjoyed being with these honest fellows. However, I had a job to do.

"Come," I said to them. "Maybe we should leave now, too." They both agreed and, having knocked back the contents of our glasses we strolled, arm in arm, into the dark streets. And as I walked with them, smiling at their loud singing, I reflected that there was no guile or pretense about these men; they were honest, happy and unafraid. Life to them was no burden, but something to be enjoyed according to their own consciences. How I envied them!

We were now in the market place of the town and I

said I must leave them. But there was a little café open nearby and, pointing to it, Bill said: "One last drink."

I agreed and we each had a glass of beer. We toasted each other and each expressed the hope that we might one day all meet again. Stanley wanted a piece of paper to write down his address so that I should know where to find him if good fortune ever took me to England, whereupon Bill took a crumpled photograph out of his pocket.

"Here, use this," he said. "Our Russian friend can keep it as a souvenir."

It was a photograph of himself in uniform, and when Stanley had finished writing his address on the back of it Bill added his own—somewhere in New York, I remember—and signed it. He handed it to me with a smile.

I put Bill's photograph in my pocket and wished both men good luck. I then walked slowly back to my quarters reflecting on this strange meeting with the American and Britisher. Bill's photograph could cause him endless involvements and complications from the long arm of the NKGB and my impulse was to destroy it straight away. But I hesitated. An instinct warned me that I had probably been watched throughout the time I had spent with the two men. I did not dare lose this photograph. When I reached my quarters I was very tired and went straight to bed.

After a few hours sleep I went to report to Kulagin. As became usual, we met at a previously agreed rendezvous, not his office nor mine, and I gave him a complete account of the proceedings of the previous evening. He was pleased. Then, acting almost in spite of myself, I produced Bill's photograph and handed it to Kulagin. He snatched it like a hungry dog on a bone.

"So," said Kulagin, exultantly, "this is what it was. I had you watched last night, purely for your own protection, of course, but as soon as you left those foreigners last night I got the report that they had passed a message to you in writing. Excellent!"

My spine crept as I heard him and I felt grateful to the instinct that had kept me from destroying the photograph. It was an instinct born of conditioning in a régime where everyone is watched and spies are spied upon, right from the Kremlin down to the humblest walks of life. This system, based on the fear of being watched, is what makes it

possible for the Soviet rulers to keep their lives and their power.

"Excellent," Kulagin repeated. "This can be a second passport to you. If you have any difficulty on your arrival in America you can show this to the authorities and ask them to trace this American. He will corroborate your story nicely. He will remember your wife, as Rachkova will be by then, and he will remember telling you all about the U.S.A. and your interest in what he said. Meanwhile I will send it to Kiev by the first courier and our handwriting experts there can reproduce this Bill's signature on as many sheets of American paper as they want to. Whenever we need his cooperation we shall be able to type in any commitment or statement to fit the situation. Yes, Granovsky, if we ever need this man he will have a very rough time indeed if he ever tries to repudiate any document we produce, even with the expert help of Scotland Yard or the American F.B.I. No one will be able to prove that the signatures were forged.

"Just imagine," Kulagin continued, gleefully, "the situation of this poor Bill when he is approached by us and shown a signed commitment. By that time he may be an important man, a respected citizen with a family and a promising career. How do you think he will react to this bolt from the blue? Do you think he will refuse to cooperate? Not one chance in a million: he would be too scared of noisy publicity, of investigations and of the effect of all this on his career and way of life.

"Up to now you are doing well," Kulagin said finally, though only he knew how sincerely he meant the compliment.

Kulagin and I decided it would be better if I did not go to Rachkova's house for tea on this first occasion. It would be easy to spoil things by being too eager and my not going might well have the desired effect of making her more interested in me. I therefore telephoned her house later in the day and was told by a servant that she was not yet up. I left my apologies with the servant to transmit to her.

But on the next day I went to her restaurant for late dinner. She was there with Tibor and joined me at my table immediately, as if we had known each other for a long time. Her easy manner towards me infuriated Tibor who was obviously making an effort to restrain himself. He

glared at me silently like a man who promises himself revenge but does not know how to achieve it.

I had purposely not been at all aggressive in my approach to Rachkova, with the result that she took the initiative and boldly insisted that I come to her house next day. In spite of Tibor's glowering, which I was quite prepared to ignore, just as Rachkova seemed to be doing, I agreed. The following afternoon, therefore, I presented myself at her house, not far from the Korona restaurant.

It was a large house and richly furnished. The floors were all well carpeted and the walls hung with fine paintings and Persian tapestries. But the overall effect was not pleasing: somehow more like a shop than a home. There was too much of everything, and everything seemed to have been bought on its merits as something costly, not for any particular charm or decorative value. It was obvious that Rachkova, having started life in poverty and suddenly become rich, used her house to try and impress her wealth upon people. Certainly the voluptuous opulence of her drawing room was more Oriental than Slav.

Except for Rachkova and myself and her servants, who for the most part remained discreetly out of sight, there were five Gypsy musicians present. They had been hired for the occasion and while Margarita and I drank Tokay wine they played their delightful Hungarian airs. They played with a great spontaneous joy and feeling and without reference to a musical score. Anyone who has not seen or heard a Hungarian Gypsy play can quite visualize how the instrument and the player become fused into one thing that seems to have only the one purpose, that of creating lovely sound.

Margarita and I sat together on a couch, and she at least seemed aware not of the musicians but only of the music. Without any sense of shame she attempted to provoke me as if we had been alone. I petted and kissed her; at such a moment I could not have done more. But I also got the impression that Margarita wanted more than pleasure from me. It seemed to me that she was maneuvering towards a situation in which she could ask a special favor of me and in which I might feel myself committed to comply. Neither of us even mentioned the name of Tibor, whose absence had at first surprised me.

I did not stay late and before I left Margarita had agreed

to come to a party that I proposed giving for her in a few days' time.

The party began at the Korona, but I intended to move on to my own quarters well before the evening ended. For the sake of appearance more than anything I had another guest, Sergei Petrovich Stasiev, the titular governor of Uzhgorod. I relied on him to help make conversation at the Korona, and then to accompany us to my quarters. But I expected him to know the right time to leave us alone.

Everything worked according to plan. After dinner and drinks at the Korona we went back to my place and it was not long before Stasiev, making some excuse about his wife not liking him to be out too late, said goodbye and left us. He had scarcely gone before Margarita began her play of seduction. I reflected that the time had now come for me to apply Rasputin's techniques on the proper target. A little response from me was all she needed to begin undressing. As I sat and finished a cigarette she removed all her clothing in front of me, not so much as bothering to turn off the lights, and then stretched herself out on the sofa in an attitude provocative enough to have startled even my old teacher of love-making. I had also started to undress when there was suddenly a loud knocking on the front door across the hallway. Margarita crouched down behind the arm of the sofa and I rushed out angrily to see who had disturbed us.

To my surprise it was Lieutenant-Colonel Krugliakov, the military commandant of Uzhgorod town, with half a dozen soldiers and Tibor, Margarita's lover. I asked what the matter was and was told that Krugliakov and his patrol were hunting a Red Army deserter and were combing every house in the neighborhood. I asked what Tibor was doing there and Krugliakov said that it was he who had reported having seen a Red Army soldier hide himself in my house.

"No doubt," said Lieutenant-Colonel Krugliakov, a little sheepishly, "he took you for a deserter since it was dark."

It was clear to me that Tibor had brought Krugliakov out of his way purely to serve his own purpose—to interrupt my little idyll with Margarita. And in this Tibor certainly succeeded. By the time the interruption was over Margarita had come into the hallway fully dressed. Krugliakov apologized to me for any inconvenience, but the damage was done.

Margarita seemed secretly delighted by what Tibor had done, and did not remain long. Outwardly she made a passable pretense at being angry with Tibor and made me warm assurances of her desire to take up where we had left off and without risk of interruption. But her assurances did not ring true.

When I reported the incident to Kulagin next day he became angry.

"This is your fault," he roared. "You remember that right at the beginning I suggested getting rid of this little gigolo Tibor."

"I remember," I answered. "But if we were to remove him at all we should have done so several weeks before I made my approach to Rachkova, to allow her time to forget him. You know, Comrade Major, a woman becomes most susceptible when she has been some time without the daily presence of the man she loves."

The effect of these words on Kulagin was extraordinary. He quite meekly agreed. No doubt they recalled memories of his own wife who had been lost to him by being kept away from him.

Thereafter I tried several times to re-establish contact with Rachkova, but without success. She was always either drunk or asleep, or both. Tibor continued to live with her and pander to her and it seemed that he encouraged her to drink. As attempt after attempt failed and as I made my reports to Kulagin it became apparent to both of us that Rachkova was fast becoming a helpless alcoholic. She had proved her instability and weakness of character. If this had not happened now it might have happened later at a far worse time. I put it to Kulagin that such a woman would be a burden rather than an asset to me in my NKGB work anywhere. Kulagin, to my great relief, agreed with me and said that he would make this point in his report to People's Commissar of the NKGB for the Ukraine, Savchenko. To myself I thanked my lucky stars for Tibor, and reflected that here was a situation that Rasputin's techniques were not good for. With all his masterly experience and technical proficiency in the field of love he had no way of making a woman immune against the love of a man who is not a Soviet spy.

For the next few days I went through an agony of sus-

pense waiting to hear from Kulagin. Finally, after three days of silence, he phoned me and told me he had good news. People's Commissar of the NKGB for the Ukraine, Savchenko, had written Margarita off as a bad risk. I was to have a new assignment.

EIGHT

THE BERLIN CHANCELLERY

DURING THE second half of April, 1945, I was called to Lvov, and was met there by Kulagin who gave me a new mission. The fall of Berlin was expected to occur shortly and I must go to the front where the battle for it was being fought so that I should enter with the first troops. But of that later. Meanwhile, as Kulagin said, there was no immediate need for me to move and I could do something useful at once to fill in the three or four days till I should leave.

"Savchenko will be leaving here shortly and returning to Kiev," he said. "And we want to send along with him, that is, in a wagon attached to his train, the best pieces of furniture and privately-owned works of art that we can find here. I will see that you get the keys to all the chief residences here from which the original occupants and owners have already been expelled and I want you to choose the best of what you find, crate it and ship it to the Kiev NKGB. You can have as many troops of the NKVD as you desire and you have full use of the political prisoners at our disposal for any manual work."

I mention this incident only for its value as an illustration of the rapacious quality in Soviet liberation, a rapacity that extended to things like tables and chairs, porcelain-ware and carpets. I carried out the mission to Kulagin's content and filled a forty-ton freight wagon that was hooked onto the train which was to take Savchenko back to Kiev.

It was rumored among Savchenko's staff that Khrushchev had given him an ultimatum concerning the liquidation of the Armia Kraiova of Polish nationalists and the *benderov-tsi*. "Either you liquidate them by May the first," Khrushchev was rumored to have said, "or I shall liquidate you." This may have been true, but the threat is not to be taken seriously. Not because such a thing could not happen but

because people are not warned that they will be liquidated. Experience and observation are the only sentinels that may warn one of the threat of liquidation.

However all that may be, I was on the platform when the train pulled out long before the end of April and was more than a little surprised that Kulagin brought me forward to see Savchenko get into the train. I was more surprised still when Commissar Savchenko interrupted his formal leave-taking to come to me, shake my hand and wish me luck in Berlin.

"Captain, you will at once proceed to the first Byelorussian front," he said, "and present yourself to Lieutenant-Colonel Vadis, chief of Smersh section there. If you find he cannot give you all the assistance you require, go to the fourth Ukrainian front, to Lieutenant-General Kavalchuk, chief of Smersh. I believe Major Kulagin has explained your mission in detail. Here are two letters that will help you. Good luck."

I looked at the envelopes. One was addressed to Lieutenant-General Vadis, chief of Smersh (Red Army Counter Intelligence) of the army commanded by Zhukov, and the other was to Lieutenant-General Kavalchuk, chief of Smersh in the army commanded by Petrov. I saw that the envelopes were open so I read the letters they contained. They requested all possible assistance for me and asked that no restriction be placed on my movements.

My mission in Berlin was to find and bring back the NKVD files taken by the Germans from Kiev during their occupation of it. I must also try to bring back anything else which I might regard as being of particular interest to the Kiev NKGB. Try, yes, because there would be others finding the same things interesting.

I had orders then to fly on the first plane from Lvov to the Berlin front and, that same day, was given a place as the only passenger on a DC-3 headed that way. Unfortunately, when we came near to Gleiwitz, one of the engines conked out and we had to make a forced landing. No one was hurt, but all of us were shaken and the plane could take us no further. I immediately set about finding a way to proceed on my journey and, making contact with the local Smersh H.Q., I was given a car so that I might reach my destination before the two days elapsed after which another plane was expected.

We passed close by Breslau and I learned for the first time of the extraordinary situation there.

Breslau, although completely surrounded by Soviet troops, had not given in. But it was not being defended by German troops. It was being held by Soviet citizens. To a man the garrison consisted of erstwhile Soviet prisoners and refugees, armed by the Germans, and they were prepared to fight to the death against their own countrymen rather than face returning to their own country where every prisoner of war was regarded as a traitor. Eventually, after seventy-eight days the town was taken, but not one of its defenders remained alive. This is surely something exceptional in history, and something of which little has been said in all the years since.

We proceeded on our journey and found a suitable billet in the eastern suburbs of Berlin. The battle for the city continued and I waited there two days before capitulation came and the Red flag had been flying from the masthead of the Reichstag for a day and a half. Meanwhile I had presented my letter to Lieutenant-General Vadis and was promised every assistance. I was introduced to several of his officers and was invited by them to go with the party that was to take the Reich Chancellery. I realized the offer was made to me out of consideration for Savchenko and I was only too glad to accept.

Even after the Red flag had been flying on the Reichstag, the Chancellery still held out for thirty-six hours until mid-day of May 2, but a troop of several hundred light infantry, armed with sub-machine guns, was put at our disposal to take control of and cordon off the building. There were seven of us *tchekists*, and as soon as General Weidling broadcast his capitulation order we approached the building at a run. Some officers emerged from it waving white pieces of cloth. We entered calmly while our troops distributed themselves round the outside and at the entrances.

The first sight that met our eyes was the row of dead and wounded that lined the great central corridor. As we approached them the smell of gangrenous flesh was almost overpowering. Some of the wounded looked at us with sullen desperate eyes as we walked towards them, our pistols in our hands. I heard a shot ring out, then another and another. There was no cause for alarm; a few of the wounded, having endured to the end and seen this last

mortification of Soviet troops entering the conquered Reich Chancellery, were putting an end to themselves. Quickly enough we disarmed the rest, though no one made any hostile move. We ordered up stretchers by runner and started removing the wounded to the nearest field hospital, and the dead to be buried wherever was most convenient. We asked why the wounded had not been better treated, why their wounds had been allowed to get into such a state. Hitler's nurse had been helping to care for them, a proud, arrogant woman with a thin nose and high-boned, pinched Prussian features. She said curtly that there were not enough bandages and not enough disinfectant. All there was had already been used long ago. Then a very interesting thing happened.

Having put the clearing of dead and wounded well in hand, the seven of us took separate ways and began to search the cellars. The direction I took happened to take me to General Weidling's staff office. Leading off from there was another room, the door to which was locked, however, I went out into the corridor again and called to an S.S. major who was helping with the wounded. I asked him where the key to that door was and he answered that it was in the keeping of the Fuehrer's cook and that he would run and get it for me. I told him to go and within a few minutes he was back and gave me the key. I refused it.

"Sie offnen!" I told him in my barely serviceable German. One could never be sure about booby traps.

There was no booby trap but what lay beyond was almost as surprising. The room was stocked high with medical supplies, bandages and first aid paraphernalia. The major seemed just as surprised as I was. It seemed it was a private store belonging to the Fuehrer. It turned out later that the cook knew about the contents of the room but, first by the Fuehrer and then by the General, had been forbidden to speak of it, despite the crying needs of the wounded.

For several days the building remained cordoned off by our troops and no one apart from ourselves was allowed inside. The cook remained there to make our meals for us, which he did exceedingly well. Marshals Zhukov and Koniev and Lieutenant-General Vadis came to have a quick look, but that was about all. The rest of us carried out a most thorough search of all the building and the outside of it within a radius of some fifty yards. It had already been

noised about that Hitler had shot himself and Eva Braun had taken poison and that his loyal S.S. troops had cremated them, and every effort was spent in trying to find some evidence of this. Even a button, the stud of a boot or a belt buckle would have helped, but we found absolutely nothing. Then, under severe interrogation, the nurse and the cook confessed that Hitler had left the Reich Chancellery in a car on April 27, with Eva Braun and Martin Bormann. There is every reason to believe that Hitler did not die as was said, and I am personally sure that if he had later found a way to give himself up to the Soviet High Command, his existence would have been kept a strict secret and he would never have been produced for trial at Nuremberg.

Meanwhile Berlin was ours. The English had already reached the Elbe by April 19, but had not crossed it. On May 3, Colonel-General Serov arrived with over 300 experienced and ranking *tchekists* to take over as chief of Smersh for the area under Army Commander Zhukov. Immediately buildings were appropriated for offices and jails, and the same work that I had seen done in Uzhgorod was started in Berlin at terrific pace. Gestapo files were examined, political prisoners were set free, displaced Soviet elements were herded up for shipment home, and the march of refugees towards the west was organized and put into immediate operation.

As soon as I could I set about looking for the files I had been sent to find. I went to the *Polizei Praesidium* and, among a great number of other *tchekists* looking for other things, I had little difficulty in locating on the index all the NKGB files that had been removed from Kiev. I dispatched these by plane and under guard to NKGB Kiev. The files thus went back from the Gestapo to the NKGB. But did it really make much difference whether they were in Russian or German hands?

NINE

CARS TO KIEV

DURING THE four years of war with Germany, the prestige and strength in argument of the Soviet government had been due in great part to, and had been obliged to depend upon, Zhukov's unquestionable ability as a general. It was Zhukov's leadership that saved Moscow from collapse before the German army, it was he who had stopped the rout and led the steady advance of the Red forces towards final victory. He had, in consequence, become a sort of symbol of all that is best in Russian patriotism, he was a people's hero and was known all over as the "savior of Moscow," heart of the Soviet motherland. But when Berlin fell, Zhukov's usefulness to the Kremlin was greatly diminished and the great popularity he had justly earned became a possible source of danger to Stalin himself, were Zhukov to become ambitious. The Kremlin therefore needed a man both completely loyal to it and yet strong enough to implement its program in conquered Germany. The choice fell on Colonel-General Serov, Lavrenti Beria's first assistant in the NKVD.

He established headquarters in Friedrichshafen, and an order was published stating that Serov had been appointed Chief of Civilian Administration under Zhukov, Commander of the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany. Vadis took second place as Serov's assistant; and although Zhukov was officially the superior of Serov, the latter had no doubts, and in fact allowed few to entertain any doubts, as to their true relationship. Serov never paid Zhukov a visit, but Zhukov, on the other hand, went frequently to see Serov and even, it was said, to receive reprimands. One such was that which followed on Zhukov's declaration that Hitler was dead. That was a bad mistake in policy, Serov said, and Zhukov had no business to make such statements. It might one day be of some use to the Kremlin, no doubt, to revive

the unity that had prevailed under Hitler and to revive it for the same purpose that Hitler had designed it years before the war, only for Soviet, not German, benefit.

In well-guarded Karlshorst, Serov set up the nucleus of the future puppet government of East Germany. He had brought with him from Moscow Wilhelm Pieck, veteran Communist and Comintern member, Walter Ulbricht, also a Comintern member, and Wilhelm Zeiser, a servant of the Kremlin since 1919 when Karl Lipknicht and Rosa Luxemburg organized the abortive Communist revolt in Germany. These three men were supplied with German nationals who had passed the most rigorous screening at the hands of Smersh interrogators and had been pronounced suitable material to carry out the satellization of Germany from the inside. Every type of civilian administration job had to be refilled or created anew and each new man was immediately given work to do.

It had already been decided that Berlin would be zoned among the four principal allies and it was known which sectors would be occupied by non-Soviet troops and come under foreign administration. The Central Operations Group of Smersh, under command of Major-General Sidnev, set about spreading the tentacles of Soviet intelligence through those parts of the city that would have to be relinquished on June 15 to the Allies. Informers were recruited, and for every informer at least one hostage was shipped east. Success in this was too easy. The few who at first resisted and refused to obey the instructions they were given were immediately punished by the complete disappearance of a near relative, and by the blunt notification that they would never be seen again.

A nucleus police force was organized of which it was hoped that many members would be taken over by the Western Allies as soon as it became their turn to organize a national police force in their zones of Berlin. Factories were dismantled and shipped out, valuables were found in the vaults of the Reichsbank and immediately removed without regard of their rightful owners. Any scientists that could be found, on the other hand, were well treated and flown "under invitation" to Moscow for questioning.

But another grim task was started also. The purging of the Red Army personnel who had advanced so far into the

West was carried out with characteristic NKVD thoroughness.

During the long, hard advance over 500 miles of territory beyond the western frontiers of the U.S.S.R., both soldiers and officers of the Red Army had seen many aspects of western life that made them wonder. Is this the degenerate capitalism that we have heard so much about? How is it that the slaves of capitalists live in such nice, cozy little houses with radios, gas stoves, and sometimes even hot and cold running water?

At the fall of Berlin, Red troops of all ranks had surrendered themselves to a tremendous orgy of drinking and looting in which all ranks took part. A spirit of wild and uncontrollable celebration took hold of everyone. There were stories of murders, rapings, smashing of property just for the hell of it by Uzbeks and inflamed bands of Tartars.

Serov snapped down hard on all this and took measures to purge the army of elements that might harbor doubts about the efficiency of the régime. On May 5, he had Garrison Commander Berzarin publish an order in Russian and German and had it posted all over the city, in military establishments and in the suburbs.

Red army personnel are forbidden to accept anything from the local population and forbidden to visit private homes. The population is ordered to assist in informing military commanders immediately of any visits made to them by personnel of the Red army. Military commanders of all districts will organize day and night patrols in their districts and arrest anyone found not complying with this order.

After this, caution enveloped the conquerors of Berlin like a shroud. But that was not sufficient. If a soldier was found to possess anything beyond his bare equipment it was assumed that he had looted it. It was useless to try and convince Smersh that he had bought it. Any contact whatsoever with the population was fraught with danger. A giant Uzbek seduced a young German girl and was found with her in a dark alley. He was arrested and two days later the girl received a formal apology and the truthful information that her seducer had been shot. She was therefore placed in the position of having to look elsewhere for cigarettes, candies and liquor.

Every Soviet soldier, officer or private, who was sent back

home was regarded as a potential security risk, and everyone was treated to humiliating personal searches, made at various assembly points along the route home, and to screening by arrogant and suspicious young *tchekists* who had never seen any fighting, much less taken part in any.

I had only one more thing to do in Berlin and my mission would be over. I had no further definite orders regarding movements, but I felt it would be best to get things over and done with and to leave before the Allies should come into the city. Kulagin had asked me to bring back a few automobiles for use by the Kiev NKGB. I had already picked up a few souvenirs from the Reich Chancellery, including Eva Braun's wine goblet made out of beaten silver with diamonds, sapphires and rubies set round the bowl, a gold-plated Caproni pistol, both of which I intended to give to Savchenko, and Hitler's fountain pen, which I intended to keep for myself. But the cars were a matter of a different order so that I thought it best to go and see Lieutenant-General Vadis personally about it. I told him that I had been commissioned to bring back a car for Savchenko and wanted something really good, as well as six other cars for the Kiev NKGB. Vadis said he would get me something really special for his old friend and chief Savchenko, but as for the other cars I must do the best I could by myself.

I went to Rathenau where the German Ford works were, feeling that although the factory was of course no longer working, I might still have a better chance there of finding some Ford Eifels in good condition. I was right, and picked up four cars in very good shape. Earmarking them and putting them in the safekeeping of Smersh, I went back to get drivers and, on the way, found two more cars at an equipment dump near the Elbe. I had them all driven, led by myself, into Friedrichshafen and garaged in the front garden of the house where I was billeted.

On the banks of the Elbe I saw something I had never seen before—the repatriation of Soviet displaced persons handed over by the Western Allies.

They were being brought across in barges by the Americans from Tangermünde on the opposite bank. On our side they were received by guards of the Internal Troops of the NKVD. They were of all sorts and ages—except for men old enough to have been in the army at the outset of the

war. They were old men, women of all ages and young men who had been taken away by the Germans for labor at the age of twelve to fifteen years. The NKVD troops received them with smiles, had their hands shaken, were even kissed by them, and watched them wave goodbye to the Americans. As the barges put back across the river the NKVD troops marched the D.P.'s calmly over a knoll and there, out of sight and hearing of the departing Americans, abruptly changed their manner to their charges. More detachments of NKVD troops were there waiting, with dogs on leashes. There was shouting.

"Look sharp, now, you traitors. Put your belongings down and line up over there!"

"Spit out that dirty American chewing gum, dog!"

The D.P.'s gasped as the reality of their situation dawned on them. They were not among friends. They were prisoners among their own blood brothers. Bereft of all they had been able to gather and bring with them, with nothing but the clothes they wore, they were marched off by their new jailers, with long-bodied, heavy-headed dogs straining at their leashes alongside.

"March faster, traitors. Didn't your German masters teach you how to march?"

I stood alone on the banks of the Elbe and watched the placid water. The Americans were on the other side. The distance could be swum easily and there were several boats moored along the bank. How wonderful, I thought, if all I had to do was get to the other side in order to be free. How wonderful! Why had the Western Allies agreed to that clause in the Yalta agreement in which they obliged themselves to repatriate displaced Soviet citizens?

There was no use even in thinking of it. I turned my back on the Elbe, walked to my car and drove away.

When I went to see Vadis I found he had really kept his word: he had an enormous Meibach-Graf Zeppelin car, run by twin Messerschmitt engines, of which only two models had ever been built, one for Himmler and the other for the Japanese ambassador in Berlin during the war. This one had belonged to the ambassador. Savchenko should be royally pleased.

I then had to find drivers to take the cars back to Kiev and was told that I could go to the D.P. camp on the Küstrin Road and take my pick of the internees.

That visit was a singular experience.

Knowing where I came from, the commanding officer offered me every help in concluding my business successfully, but first, he asked, would I not like to have a little fun? I told him I had not come for any fun but, in any case, what did he mean?

"If you would like to accompany me," he said, "I will show you."

It was a hot day, in fact it was exceedingly hot, but that did not prevent my surprise when, on coming to the women's quarters, I saw through the barbed wire that a few thousand women were walking about and standing in various attitudes completely naked. As we came into view some of them called out to us and made lewd gestures and coarse suggestions.

"What is this?" I asked, and he laughed.

"If you feel like it," he said, "you can have any of these women for a couple of cigarettes or even for a glass of water. There is no running water in their barracks and the allotment is apparently insufficient for them."

I looked at the women silently for a little while. They seemed to vary in age from anything between fifteen and fifty.

"Do they find many takers?" I asked.

The officer shrugged.

"Of course, the soldiers are not allowed inside so they cannot do very much for them. But they get their cigarettes. With the non-commissioned officers and the rest of us it is different. We can take a few of them out when we feel like it. The best are not on view today," he added as an afterthought.

"Can we see about the drivers now, Comrade Captain?" I asked him.

"Certainly. This is just a little amusement. Life is dull here, you know."

We went to the men's quarters and the officer shouted out that he wanted all driver mechanics to line up outside. The guards transmitted the order to the inmates of the barrack rooms and in a few minutes quite a number of men were lined up for me to inspect. There were several thousand men in the camp and several hundred who were prepared to call themselves driver mechanics.

"Let all but the Ukrainians fall out," I told the com-

mander, and the order was given. From those who remained I chose the five drivers I wanted and took them inside. Then I made them an offer.

"Listen, you men. You all know what your situation is now according to Soviet law. You who have allowed yourselves to be captured by the Germans and who have worked for them, you are all thought of as traitors to our motherland. The best you can hope for when you return is five years in a labor camp."

The men looked at me shiftily and waited for me to continue.

"Now, I have five cars which I want driven to Kiev, the capital city of your own republic. I want you to drive the cars with me there. We will deliver them to the NKGB of Kiev. You know what that means. I can promise you that, if you look after the cars properly and see that they all arrive safe and sound, I will do the best I can to have all your sentences commuted or, if possible, any punitive measures dispensed with altogether. Does each one of you feel he can carry out his part of the bargain?"

They were eager now, and one or two of them actually smiled. They all assured me that I would have no cause for concern with them, and they thanked me. I saw no reason for further delay. I knew they had no belongings to pack because all D.P.'s belongings were confiscated from them before they came to camp, so I told them to be prepared to leave immediately. All were men over thirty-five years of age, of the sturdy, trustworthy peasant-turned-industry-worker type, except for one young fellow of about twenty for whom I had felt an impulse of pity and decided to take along. The impulse proved later to be a mistake.

I drove the men back to Friedrichshafen and there gave each his car and placed a guard over them. Each man had to look over his vehicle carefully so that no excuse could be made for breakdowns later on. Next morning before dawn I saw that the men had a good breakfast and, with the passes and Smersh approval lists concerning the cars, set out for Kiev. I went in the Meibach-Graf Zeppelin, driven by the most experienced driver, and the others all went in front. Whenever we came to a barrier or checking post all the front cars stopped, I drove up, presented the documents, let the other cars advance and took up my place at the rear again. In the boot of the car I had the trophies I intended

giving as presents and keeping for myself and my family.

All went well until the young man I had picked on a sentimental impulse smashed his car against an oncoming Studebaker truck. We all stopped. Luckily the truck was little damaged, though I had sufficient unpleasantness to contend with from its occupant, a lieutenant-colonel, and was able to proceed on its way. Our car was ruined. At any rate, it would no longer serve as a present and I would have to abandon it. My first impulse was to shoot the young fool of the driver there and then, but I refrained from doing this and contented myself with telling the men that by his stupidity he had seriously affected my chances of getting them off their prison terms. The others told me that they would get me a car to replace the one we had to abandon; they would look for any Pole with a car, they said (for we were already in Poland), and bring it back to me.

"You may be able to get me a car," I said, "but you can't get me a license plate and engine number to tally with the ones I have written down in the documents I carry in my pocket."

There was nothing for it but to continue with six cars instead of seven, the young driver sitting disconsolate beside the driver of the first in the line. Of course, we had difficulties. It took me more than an hour to convince the guards at one military perimeter that I was not a liar, and I wondered what would happen when we came to a border manned by frontier troops.

Near Zamość something happened which I thought would help.

It was night time and we were driving slowly with dimmed lights because we were in territory I knew was pestered by the remnants of the Armia Krajowa. Suddenly the first car of our convoy turned out its lights and stopped. The rest of us followed suit. The boy traveling next to the driver of the first car got out and came running to my car.

"Did you see the firing?" he asked breathlessly through the window.

I had not, but now, in the stillness, I could hear the sound of it. I got out of the car and called everyone out onto the road. There was a small battle going on ahead of us. The sounds of shooting were now quite clear and every now and then we saw the flash of firearms.

Each man stayed by his car, by the side of the road, and we sat waiting for the fight ahead of us to show signs of having finished. We had sat thus for some forty minutes when we heard the sound of light wheels on the road and a man on a bicycle came into view. I heard the whirr of his free-wheeling for a second as he spotted our cars and then he pedaled on hard. I pulled out my pistol, jumped out in front of him and shouted out in Polish:

"Stać!"

Why I used the Polish word for stop I don't quite know. It came like a reflex. But the man put on his brakes and halted. I covered him with my pistol and asked him where he was going.

"I am escaping from the fighting, comrade officer," he said in bad Russian, after a little hesitation. "Please, I have done nothing. Let me go home." I told one of my men to hold his bicycle and proceeded to search him. Thrusting my hand under his jacket I found a Smith and Wesson pistol in a shoulder holster.

"So, my friend," I said. "Now perhaps you will admit you are no peasant trying to get home. Where are you going with this?"

"I will tell you nothing." He said it in Polish, like an insult, a challenge.

He had caught me in an odd position. I was conducting five prisoners single-handed back to Kiev, and I could rely on them just so far and no further. Now this man was the sixth and I could rely on him only to attack me and escape at the first opportunity. I decided it would be safer, in the circumstances, to keep his gun myself and put him in my car. But before doing so I ordered my driver to take off the new prisoner's trousers and bind them round his feet. With the belt his arms were then bound as close together as possible at the elbow behind his back and, as a last touch, I had him blindfolded with my handkerchief—he himself had not got one.

I was very pleased with what had happened because I felt that on arriving at the next Smersh headquarters, instead of having trouble about the number of cars under my care, I would have congratulations and a hearty wish for a good journey.

It was not long before the firing ceased and then, having given it time to start again, we resumed our way. It was

nearly morning and all of us were tired. The Pole sat next to me silently, the position of his arms forcing him to assume an uncomfortable position on the soft seat of the car.

At Zamość we halted and I reported to the Smersh headquarters. The officer commanding was, in fact, very glad to have the Polish prisoner and congratulated me roundly. My men were given beds in the jail and I was given a room in the Smersh billet for a few hours. I had a very good sleep.

Next morning I had a crude jolt.

Instead of the smiles that had sent me with easy conscience to bed in the early hours, the lieutenant-colonel of Smersh appeared with a sullen face and asked me why it was I only had four cars when my documents mentioned five. Had I sold the fifth on the way? I told him the whole story but he did not seem prepared to believe it. I reminded him of the Pole.

"Don't mention that Pole," he shouted. "He has escaped!"

I was dumbfounded.

"How the hell . . . ?"

"He ripped the bars out of the window of his cell."

"I am very sorry," I said. "I had no idea he was such a strong man."

"And I had no idea," he said, "that Polish cement was so weak."

However, I was able to convince him of the truth about the missing car and he allowed me to proceed.

TEN

POETRY OF DECEIT

"YOU HAVE done a good job."

As Savchenko said this, Kulagin smiled in satisfaction. I had not let him down. Savchenko had questioned me in detail about Berlin and what was happening there. He had been more pleased at my answers, it seemed, than with the presents I had brought for him.

"May I mention one more thing now, Comrade Commissar?" and as he nodded, I asked him if anything could be done to reduce or cancel the sentences of the Ukrainian drivers. He thought for a minute and said he could get two of them off entirely by setting them to work in interior district NKGB sections and two more he would look after as best he could. But the fifth, the one who had smashed his car, why, he deserved twenty years.

He had not much more to say to me, leaving as usual all the details to Kulagin, but he hinted that my new mission would take me away for a very long time and suggested that I go to Moscow for a day and see my mother and brother. He said that within a little while of my going away he would arrange to have my mother brought over to Kiev and set her up in pleasant quarters. I thanked him.

I took a night train to Moscow and spent the next day with Mother and Volodia, coming back that same night. Both looked much better, as Mother had been receiving regular remittances from the First Department of the Ukrainian NKGB. We had a pleasant enough day and went to a cinema in the afternoon, but I was eager to get back to Kiev and learn what my mission would be.

Shortly after my return to Kiev I had an unexpected meeting with an old friend from the Special School of Guerilla Warfare. His name was Lieutenant Platon Voronko. He was one of the few graduates of that school who had survived, since hundreds had been lost and killed on sabo-

tage missions and other operations behind the German lines. But he was cheerful and confident, as are most men who come through danger unhurt. He was of medium height and stocky build, with a round face and unusually long black hair, just as I remembered him. But there was a difference, for now he was wearing civilian clothes made of the best English cloth and he looked a little incongruous in them. He was in high spirits and suggested we have a few drinks together. This we forthwith did and, as is the custom, toasted our fallen comrades. This done, Platon turned to me and said: "Anatoli, I have something to tell you."

"Good news?" I asked.

"Wait till you hear," he answered. "You won't have forgotten that I am a poet. Do you remember my verses?"

"Not a single line," I confessed, smiling. "But I well remember having to listen to you read them out at the spy school. Surely you've grown out of that now!"

"Grown out of it indeed! Not a bit of it. At last I am getting some recognition."

"Do you mean you have actually had some of your things published?" I asked incredulously. I remembered being bored to distraction by his readings.

"Well," said Voronko, rather mysteriously, "in a way, yes."

"How can that be? Either you have or you haven't."

"It is not quite as simple as that."

"Now, really Platon," I exclaimed, a little impatiently. "What are you talking about?"

His reply was almost disconcerting. Producing from his pocket an Ukraine NKGB identification card, he said to me:

"Now show me yours."

I produced my card and showed it to him. He examined it briefly.

"Yes," he said. "That seems to be in order. One cannot be too careful." He smiled disarmingly before continuing.

"The newspaper *Dnepro* has published quite a lot of my work, and soon I am to be launched internationally." Voronko laughed delightedly. "I can see this amazes you so I shall confess straight away that my talent for verse is not the only factor in all this. There are two other factors; first, that I have seen quite a lot of action, and second, though

more important, that I work for Soviet Intelligence. Tell me, Anatoli, you have not heard of the First International Congress of Anti-Fascist Youth?"

"Not until you mentioned it."

"They are preparing for it now in London. It is primarily to bring together young intellectuals from all the western countries who have seen fighting against the Fascists, whether in the armed forces or in the underground organizations. When Commissar Savchenko was informed of this it occurred to him that I would be a good delegate to send. I am young, I have been in action several times and I am an intellectual. The only thing against me was that none of my verse had yet been published, but Savchenko soon fixed that. I am now on the staff of the *Dnepro* and the editor has been given suitable instructions concerning my work. It appears regularly now and I find that I am becoming quite well known, even among people who have never read a line of my verses."

"And so you are going to London?"

"Yes."

"No difficulty with a visa?"

"Why should there be? The British were very helpful and gave me a visa with almost no delay. To them I am a young fighting poet, just what is wanted for this congress, and nothing more. How would they know about the other things?"

We both laughed aloud. "You are an incredible fellow," I told Voronko. "But what will your job be in London? Your real job, I mean."

"I am to mingle with the other delegates and personally promote as much sympathy as possible for the Soviet Union. Also, I shall have plenty of opportunity to read my poetry, all of which will be of the sort that should command sympathy for Soviet people, their great courage in the war, their love of peace, the humanitarian ideals of our leaders, and so on. Incidentally, I am getting some help with this poetry. Some of the best writers in the Russian language have written pieces which I have been instructed to pass off as my own." He shrugged, and added: "It is in a good cause, so why should I object?"

Voronko went on to explain that he was also expected to find "friends of the Soviet Union," young people who could be induced to help the Communist cause but yet

who, because of their irreproachable backgrounds, war records and unquestioned patriotism, would be able to help more effectively than ordinary sympathizers. Voronko was meanwhile working very hard on his own preparations for the congress. He was studying the backgrounds and former work of a number of known western delegates to the congress so that when he arrived he would be able to give his activities greater focus with a minimum loss of time.

Voronko and I parted company after this first meeting. We wished each other luck and I hoped that he would one day achieve proper recognition without the need for any help from such as Savchenko. He thanked me for this sentiment but said that if a boy cannot reach the cake on the shelf he climbs on his brother's shoulders. I am not sure that the analogy was a very good one.

I learned later that Voronko's congress took place in London in October 1945. There were several reports in the British press, and world press, about the Ukrainian poet Voronko whose poetry (alas, not all of it his) so impressed the other delegates at the congress. No doubt these reports can still be found. And no doubt, even as they were being written, Voronko was busily engaged on the more practical side of his activities in London. When he returned to Kiev he must certainly have brought with him many photographs and autographs of other, "useful" delegates as well as other data about such people, most of which has certainly been put to some use by now by Soviet Intelligence.

ELEVEN

PRAGUE THE SPRING-BOARD

KULAGIN AND I sat together alone in his office and he outlined to me what I would have to do. He had already filled me in on the background information and political situation, telling me first of the geographically strategic importance of Czechoslovakia, its industrial potential, greater than any country's between the U.S.S.R. and East Germany, and of the steps taken by the Kremlin to gain political concessions from the Czechoslovak government in exile in return for Soviet support after their country's liberation from the Germans. The concessions demanded and obtained consisted largely of the appointment of people trusted by the Kremlin to positions of power within the Czechoslovak cabinet. In exchange, therefore, for Stalin's promise not to interfere with his policy in Czechoslovakia, B enes, the Czechoslovak President, appointed Fierlinger as Prime Minister, Gottwald as first Deputy Prime Minister, General Svoboda as Minister of Defense, Nosek as Minister of Interior, Kopecki as Minister of Propaganda and Niedli as Minister of Education. All these, with the exception of Fierlinger, were our men, and as for him, from its experience of him during his term as Czechoslovak Ambassador to Moscow, the Kremlin was sure he would serve its purpose well enough. He was not a Communist, I was told, but he was extremely ambitious and an outright opportunist. The other members of the cabinet, of whom the most important were Sramek and Jan Masaryk, were not considered to constitute a serious threat to the predominance of Communist influence and would, on the contrary, lend a certain initial prestige to the government due to their great popularity in the West.

I was told how, in spite of these arrangements, the success of Soviet policy in Czechoslovakia would depend on the success of the Red Army in the field. The Red Army

must take Prague. Neither of the conferences at Teheran and Yalta had stipulated which army should take Prague, and it so happened that it nearly fell to General Patton's American troops. On April 21 it was learned that Patton's army was on the western border of Czechoslovakia and on May 7, 1945, Stalin directly ordered the Commander of the First Ukrainian Front to move his entire armored corps, under command of General Rybalko, into Prague and occupy it at all costs before General Patton's forces could enter the city. Over five thousand tanks set out on this drive to Prague and less than three thousand arrived. But they took the city at 5 A.M. on May 9. A little over one hour later, Patton's advance forces reached the city suburbs, but as the Red forces were already there Patton's army withdrew to Pilsen and there set up their headquarters.

I was to go to Prague, now occupied by the Red Army and where political infiltration was already at an advanced stage.

"Our chief man in Prague," Kulagin said, "is Captain Bogdan Petrovich Bogun. He has done excellent work, but soon he will have to be moved out and you will have to replace him. He has already organized a very efficient and well-knit spy ring there and, as you will see from his radio messages, he reports that public feeling is very much in our favor. There is still a great deal of anti-Nazi and anti-Munich resentment which Bogun and his men, besides many others, have gone a long way toward turning into pro-Soviet sentiment."

"What is the set-up exactly?" I asked.

"You will work unknown to all but ten people, local people, your chief spies, and they in turn will work incognito to all but you and their own spies from whom information will originate and be passed on to you. You will have to coordinate as much of it as you can and pass everything on to us here. Here we put the pieces together and inform Moscow. Any changes of policy or instructions to the Party resulting from your information will come after proper consultation at Politburo level and will be sent through Molotov and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. You must have absolutely no direct contact with the Czech Communist Party or any of its members, still less must you have any dealings with the Soviet Em-

bassy in Prague. We will judge as to whether they should be informed of or instructed to do anything that you deem necessary. Remember, the Communist Party is not yet in power in Czechoslovakia and our men are still infiltrating."

"But some members of the government, like Gottwald, are Party members?" I interjected inquiringly.

"Never mind," insisted Kulagin. "No direct contact. They must not even know that you exist."

Kulagin then told me about Bogun, the man I was to replace. There was quite a lot to tell as he had had an almost fantastically checkered and often surprisingly lucky career. Bogun had been a *tchekist* for over twenty years and now, at the age of forty-five, was a captain, a rank to which he had been promoted seventeen years before. This fact by itself was surprising enough, but when I was told more I wondered how he had ever managed to retain his rank at all. Actually, I had met him before, for he had been at the Special School for Spies and Saboteurs when I was there. I now remembered him as a tall, balding man, taciturn and morose. But I had not known him very well. It seemed that the melancholy look and reserve that I remembered did little more than serve to conceal another side to his nature, a wild and reckless taste for woman and strong drink, and for danger. He was, in fact, a very courageous man who had often acted with great individuality and indiscretion. As a young member of the Communist Party he had first been pressed into service with the OGPU, but the work he had to do must have been, in a sense, too much for him. He took to heavy drinking and was finally discharged for habitual drunkenness. But the organization still kept tabs on him and in 1936, when the mad Yezhov became chief of the NKVD, Bogun was re-recruited. By this time he had presumably come to terms with the demands of his duties. He became one of the most feared and hated interrogators of the Fifth Section, whose job it was to extract false confessions from prisoners. When Beria took over from Yezhov in 1938 Bogun was again fired.

Once again, just before the war, in 1941, Bogun was recalled into the service and became a secret agent. This time, but for one close call, he was there to stay. The close call came after he escaped from German-occupied Ukraine and turned up in Moscow with a sackful of Soviet money as his only baggage. He omitted to report to the authori-

ties on his return and omitted to hand in the money, which he had somehow snatched while in the Ukraine. He, and what was left of the money, were apprehended when he was at the height of a tremendous spree. Curiously enough, the affair ended there.

After a course of espionage and sabotage at Vorontslov-Dashkov castle, Bogun was parachuted into the surroundings of Kiev in the summer of 1943. His orders were to blow up the Gestapo headquarters which were situated in the old NKGB building. He did not succeed in this but, nevertheless, when the Red Army regained Kiev in November of the same year, he presented himself to the authorities and was almost immediately sent to Rovno on a similar mission. There he managed to destroy a number of Gestapo agents. It was after this mission that he and a group of others were parachuted into the proximity of Prague.

He had worked very successfully there for some time and seemed really to have come into his own. As chief of a small nucleus to begin with, he was now Guerrilla-Chief in command of a guerrilla force of over 400, mostly Czechoslovakians. He was joined by Brigadier-General Beranek who had been purged out of the Czech army by the Germans, and he made him his chief of staff.

But during all this time Bogun had not ceased to be concerned with the ultimate NKGB objectives. Taking full advantage of his prestige among the partisans both in his group and in others, he made a careful selection of potential spies and managed to get them all to sign up. There is not any doubt that, when asked to sign the promises to the NKGB, most did so simply because they admired and trusted Bogun. Now, of course, they were held firm.

On the 5th of May the Prague uprising began. *Obergruppenfuhrer* Karl Hermann Frank fled the city and surrendered to the American army of General Patton. Following Frank's example, Lieutenant-General Vlassov, a Red Army general who had deserted to fight for the Germans, also surrendered to General Patton's army, taking with him his force of 15,000 men. But they were not so lucky as Frank, for the Americans promptly handed them back to the Soviet authorities. Now Vlassov's chief of staff, Major-General Trukhin, known as one of the most erudite and cultured generals of the Red Army, was captured by Bogun,

and an interesting relationship must have developed. Trukhin gave Bogun a photograph of himself, which I later saw, and which bore his autograph and the dedication: "To the heroic Guerrilla, Colonel Bogun; a memento from an old Major-General of the Red Army who committed an irreparable mistake."

Later, in the summer of 1946, in Moscow, Vlassov, Trukhin and all the men who had gone over to the *wehrmacht* with them, were hanged.

The spies that Bogun had recruited, and whose activities would come directly under my control were: Count Colorado-Mansfeld; the Count's chauffeur; General Beranek, chief of the third Czech military region; Stepanek, the manager of the Steiner Hotel; Borovichko, the chief of police in Dobžiš; Juri Matlach, importer and perfume and jewelry dealer; Vinogradov, an engineer; Rijkov, the manager of the František-Pajout Construction Co.; and Korneev, a merchant. These last three were White Russians domiciled for many years in Prague. Each one had a pseudonym by which he would be known for all purposes within the intelligence organization. The Count would be known as Duque, his chauffeur as Malina, the General as Number Two, Stepanek as Pražna Brana, Borovichko as Number Nine, Matlach as Carpaty, Vinogrado as Vladimir, Rijkov as Vaclav, and Korneev as Sosna.

There would be one more, a Czech woman called Marina Tsemperova, who had lived with her husband for some years in the Soviet Union during the war, spoke excellent Russian, and would be my radio operator and cypher expert.

I spent the next few days reading the messages that came in from Bogun, studying the dossiers of the spies and generally familiarizing myself with all relevant background information. Then Kulagin called me in for another talk.

"What we discussed before," he said, "will be your primary object in Prague. But you will have another and more important object as well. For you Prague will be a springboard for another mission. It will be from Prague that you will go to the West and come among our enemies of tomorrow, the Western Allies."

I suddenly felt the need for a conscious effort to prevent my breath from coming faster. It should be all the same to me, any mission, any place and any time. I had shown

enough preference in the past when I fled the Second Department, and I must be careful to show none now. I said nothing.

"The plan is that you should escape with someone important who is already ours. You could go as his companion and friend in an adventure, and you would keep an eye on him, control him and direct him abroad. The likeliest prospect, as far as I can see, is this Count Mansfeld. When we go to Prague, study him and tell me what you think about him. Captain Bogun will be back here today and we will go back soon after with him. But don't mention any of this to Bogun. The less who know the better."

When I left Kulagin I felt that it would do me good to have a few drinks, but I refrained until later that day when Bogun arrived. With him, I soon learned, it was always possible to have a drink, and not so few either. Whatever I had been told about his capacity for drink was no exaggeration. I have never known anyone drink so much, so fast and with so little effect. Already reserved and unemotional by nature, he seemed to become even more so when he drank. Wine did not loosen his tongue but, if anything, made him more deliberately, somehow more ominously self assured. It was evident to me during this short meeting that Bogun was quite fearless and could be a very dangerous man indeed.

One evening, shortly after Bogun's arrival, he, Kulagin and I were having a little party in Kulagin's quarters. The telephone rang and Kulagin answered it and listened attentively. Then he spoke a single sentence into the receiver and put it down.

"Put that colonel under arrest immediately."

He walked back to us with a set face, buttoned his tunic and put his cap on.

"Come on," he said. "We have work to do."

On the way over to the offices of the NKGB he explained briefly what had happened. A man had presented himself at the NKGB offices and had asked in bad Russian to be taken to Captain Bogun. He had not been willing to give any details, identifying himself simply as a friend of Bogun's, and when asked how he had traveled said that he had been brought by a Red Army colonel.

"I don't care who your friend is," Kulagin told Bogun,

"but I am going to have that colonel punished for smuggling refugees across the border."

Bogun himself frowned and kept silent. He did not like the sound of this at all.

As soon as we were in our office, Kulagin had the man brought in. He no sooner saw Bogun than he burst out in a torrent of relieved Czech. Bogun shook his hand and spoke to him for a few minutes. Kulagin was getting impatient, as he understood nothing of what was said, and neither did I for that matter.

"Enough!" he snapped finally, and after sending the man out, asked: "Who is he?"

"He is Count Mansfeld's chauffeur," said Bogun, a little excitedly. "The Count sent him to find me because he is in trouble. It is rather confused, but it seems that Gottwald has accused him of pro-Nazi leanings and is having him questioned by the police."

This was a bombshell. We speedily made sure of the facts as best we could and then Kulagin informed Savchenko. The lot of us then received orders to set out next day for Prague.

TWELVE

GOTTWALD AND THE COUNT

WE FLEW to Uzhgorod and there picked up a car, radio equipment and the operator Marina Tsemporova, and proceeded immediately by road to Prague.

After spending one night in a wood, we drove straight to Count Mansfeld's castle at Dobžiš and were met there by his major-domo, Marvan, who knew Bogun well and treated us with every respect.

The Count himself was not in as he had been called to Prague on business. I took it the major-domo did not know what business. It was hoped the Count would not long delay, but in any event he had already received instructions that should Captain Bogun arrive in his absence Marvan was to put the left wing of the castle at his disposal. The Count himself occupied the right wing.

Marvan must have informed one or two people in the locality that Bogun was back because by the time we had taken a bath each, and changed our shirts, we learned that there were some people to greet us. They were local people and all but one knew Bogun only as a brave partisan leader. They had come to see if he brought any news, as people hungered for news then. It impressed me to see how popular Bogun had become so that they treated him almost as host in the Count's castle. Marvan had a table laid and wines were served. The Count did not appear until quite late in the evening and when I saw him he looked tired. Soon after his arrival the guests left and we had a little talk with him.

He did not look like the effete and degenerate nobleman that I had read of in the Soviet Union. Slim and quite tall, he had short brown hair, an oval face and steady, intelligent eyes. He walked and moved with a smooth grace and easy self-possession that made the rest of us look and feel, perhaps, extraordinarily ponderous and rude. There was perhaps a certain weakness in his mouth, but it was compen-

sated for by the level gaze of his eyes that seemed to speak of concealed courage. He was not yet thirty and I could have broken him across my knees, but he impressed me enormously.

We sat in a library lined with books that were very nice to look at but which I feel were seldom read. High French windows reflected the light from the chandelier and, where they were open, showed a view of lawns and dim flower beds in the moonlight.

"What is the trouble, Count?" Kulagin asked, and the title fell queerly from his lips as I knew it would from mine when I should be forced to use it.

"Your man Gottwald is trying to make political capital at the expense of my estate."

"Not quite our man, Count," Kulagin corrected. "He is the leader of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, an independent organization."

The Count let his eyelids close for a second, and the tiny gesture had had the effect of calling Kulagin a liar.

"In any event," continued the Count, "he has asked me to contribute my estate to launch his campaign of land reform."

"Of course, you were able to come to terms with him?" asked Kulagin hopefully.

"How?"

"By offering a part at least, for the time being."

"I was not and, to tell you the truth, I did not try. I told him that he may have my land when I choose to give it, not when he chooses to take it. I did not fight in the resistance against the Nazis in order to dance to any tune the first demagogue cares to play after the war."

"Perhaps it would be wiser, Count, if you were to show less firmness," suggested Kulagin.

"Perhaps, but I am inclined to be firm about such things. What I want to know from you is whether you will have this nonsense put a stop to or not."

"I shall indeed," promised Kulagin, "as soon as I get back to Kiev. But may I suggest that, as a practical expedient, you become less definite with Gottwald. Neither refuse nor comply, hold him off. Believe me, that will be of great assistance to us all."

The Count looked at Bogun for a second.

"I'll try it," he said.

Later that night Kulagin came into my room.

"You know, Anatoli," he said, "if the Count's estate were expropriated—at the right time, of course—it would give him a reason for escaping that every westerner will understand. The trouble is he does not like Gottwald and he is very attached at present to his property. What we should prevent at any cost is that he tell Gottwald that he works with us. That would be fatal. Savchenko would never allow us to use him again, for anything. And it would be the end for Bogun who prepared him. It is not an easy thing to settle in the best way, and the Count is not like any other agent. He has never accepted any money. He is a little angry today, but I am sure, and Bogun bears me out, that he believes in the sincerity of the Soviet Government. He believes that we are interested in having a pro-Soviet but essentially Czech nationalist democratic government here, and he gives us his help because we helped the Czechs against the Nazis. We must handle this thing very carefully."

It was a very interesting situation and I began to understand that there were fine possibilities for me personally. As far as I could see, whenever the Count's property was expropriated—though this could not be done yet as the Czech Communist Party had not yet sufficient strength—it would be a great blow to him. It would not be the westerners so much as he himself who would consider this an excellent reason for accepting the offer to escape with me, and he would harbor deceit in his heart. I would have to conceal this from Kulagin in the future, and I could not ever permit myself the luxury of confiding in the Count and telling him to bide his time so as not to jeopardize his chances of getting out of the country as planned.

I had no suggestion for Kulagin that night except that the Count should be convinced of our willingness to help him now in his predicament.

I spent the next few days with Kulagin and Bogun getting to know the remaining members of the ring, whose dossiers I had read days before in Kiev. We continued to live in the castle and would do so until Kulagin left with Bogun, when I would move to another place. By the end of August 1945, Kulagin was ready to leave, and on the eve of his departure we had a few drinks and a talk. I was already in charge and had received the funds, in Czech crowns, English pounds, French francs and American dollars, needed for running

the show. I had the radio codes and a clear knowledge of what had to be done.

"You understand," said Kulagin, "that if things run smoothly I may never see you again?"

I nodded and smiled. We had already had a few drinks and the Slav temperament reacts to encroaching drunkenness with increasing demonstrativeness.

"We have been good friends, Anatoli, you and I," continued Kulagin.

"You risked your safety to save me from prison, my friend. I shall never forget that. But for your friendship I should perhaps not be alive now."

He stood up and we embraced. Then we refilled our glasses and sat silently, wondering whether to speak our secret thoughts.

"I am not going to bed tonight, Anatoli. I leave at one o'clock tomorrow morning. You will stay with me until then?"

"Need you ask?"

"When I go," said Kulagin, screwing up his eyes and slowly nodding his head like a man considering a very good idea with favor, "when I go, I think I shall take a few things along with me from here."

I was more than a little surprised.

"From the Count's castle?" I asked.

"Yes. Why not? He has a lot of things here he does not need. He never even sees half the rooms in the place in years together. He would not even notice. These curtains, for instance," he said, reaching out and feeling their rich texture with his fingers.

"You mean you want to take things without telling him?"

Kulagin looked at me suspiciously.

"And what's wrong with that? We are the masters here, and he knows it."

"But this is madness," I exclaimed. "He will lose his respect for you. You will be like a common thief to him. Look, Georgi, believe that I am really your friend and it is as a friend that I speak now. If you take anything at all, whether you tell him or not, he will lose his respect for you. But if you go without saying anything and he finds things missing after you are gone and knows that you took them he will think you are a coward as well as a thief."

Kulagin glared at me, his eyes misty with drink, but he

said nothing. Then he turned away and sulked at his boots. It seemed he was convinced.

"But I shall take his car," he said, and I saw that he had had his eye on it for some time.

"Then you must tell him," I said.

"No," he shouted. "You will tell him, tomorrow."

"It'd be the act of a fool."

He leaned forward in his chair and glared at me.

"Captain Granovsky," he said. "You will inform the Count that I found I needed another car and that I borrowed his. I shall return it as soon as possible."

I shrugged my shoulders.

"All right."

"And do not refer to the matter again with me, if you please."

"You introduced the subject, not me."

"Enough!" he shouted. I thought he intended to strike me and I waited for him. But he smiled.

"Fill your glass, my friend, you are not drunk enough."

When I went down to breakfast next morning with the Count, four places were laid as usual, but, of course, Bogun and Kulagin had left. I sat down with the Count and told him that my comrades had had to leave suddenly during the night.

"I hope they have a good journey," he said, and I wondered if there was any sarcasm in the polite, modulated voice.

I told the Count that I, too, would be leaving him that same day but that, before going, I would like to have a talk with him, privately, where we would not be overheard. He suggested the gardens would be the best place.

I told him of the car and made Kulagin's apologies for him and, although the Count brushed the matter aside as one of no moment, by a tiny flicker of the eye he betrayed his feeling that this was a strange way to act.

"I hope that he arrives safely in Kiev, at any rate," the Count said, "and that he does not delay in putting right this difficulty of mine. It is very urgent, you know."

"Before he left he told me that he would do all he could in order that the matter be forgotten."

"Perhaps you will understand me when I say that my attitude regarding my property has nothing to do with the

very real gratitude I feel for you Russians as liberators of my homeland. I personally believe that with Germany on our western frontier we must have a friendly Soviet Union in the east. If the socialist movement takes hold here I might even give part of my land over to it, but I am not going to submit to force. Threatening me with trumped-up charges of pro-Nazism will be of no use to anyone. The people who take my estate, I assure you, without my consent, must take my life first."

A look into his calm, intelligent, weary eyes was enough to convince me that he meant what he said.

After I had left the castle that day and installed myself in the Steiner Hotel, near the *Pražhna Brana*, I took my radio operator out with me into the woods and we sent a message to NKGB Kiev.

It went something like this:

Convinced only possible way avert loss important agent Mansfeld instruct Gottwald alter method of approach. Threats and bribes no use with Mansfeld. He can only be convinced ideologically.

Receipt of this message was acknowledged but no reply came.

It was obvious why Gottwald wanted the Count to give up his estates. If it could be said that the Count had done so voluntarily, that fact alone would lend enormous prestige to the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia. It would constitute just such a victory as the Communist Party needed to impress the electorate, the importance of which was still in those days a real consideration in Czechoslovakia.

I think the message must have had some effect, however, because the Count was not bothered for some time. Owing to the nature of my business, however, I felt that the less personal contact between him and me for the time being the better, and I arranged it that Borovichko, the Dobžiš police chief, should give me any news of him that he heard.

THIRTEEN

RED VIRUS

I REGISTERED at the Steiner Hotel as a Sub-Carpathian Ukrainian. As the manager of the hotel was one of my men it did not really matter too much if things looked perfectly in order with me or not, especially as the city was not yet running normally. From there I went out and received my reports, made my payments, checked information and transmitted what was important to Kiev. I worked correctly as I had been trained. It is obvious that some of the information I sent back led to people's arrests, but I could not do otherwise. I was going to escape and I was not going to be foolish and endanger my chances of success.

I tried at this time to get permission from Kiev to put the scheme of engineering the Count's escape into operation. I did not wish to risk a further bout with Gottwald, so why not get out now while there was time? I did not feel at all sure of the outcome of any approach regarding the Count's estate made by Gottwald.

While all this was going on I had put in for Czech citizenship, as it had been supposed by Kulagin and his chiefs that this would help me later abroad and it was interesting to have the papers issued officially by the Bénes government and not forged. In answer to my suggestion to go ahead with our plan now anyway, I was instructed to hold on until my citizenship papers came through. This matter was being handled by one of my agents, known in the ring as Vaclav.

Vaclav, or to give him his proper name, Gregori Rijkov, was an interesting case study. Both he and his wife were a living example of the sort of passionate allegiance to a cause that can be achieved by a skillful and adroit use of the right propaganda.

There was no doubt that Gregori Rijkov was an ardent Communist, though it might be more exact to call him a Soviet patriot. His patriotism was entirely emotional, a pas-

sion born of nostalgia and forgotten frustrations, and he gave it rational expression by service to communism. Yet a study of his background and family history would have led one to believe just the opposite.

In Czarist times Gregori's father had been chief accountant of the largest ship building company in Russia. In those days he befriended a young man who was alert, intelligent and ambitious, but completely illiterate. He taught this young man to read and helped him in many other small ways to make a worthwhile start in life. The young man's name was Klement Voroshilov. Voroshilov left his friend and tutor to apply his rudimentary learning, his keen wits and great stamina to the problem of his own advancement in the world. He moved fast. During the Revolution he was Stalin's right hand man at the defense of Tsaritsin (which was later renamed Stalingrad and, recently, again renamed Volgograd by Khrushchev). Thereafter he grew steadily in rank and renown, becoming a Marshall of the Soviet Union and, finally, President of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. Somewhere along the stairway to power came the time when Voroshilov was able to stop and think how to repay his old friend Rijkov, and repay him he did. He repaid him with all the callous ruthlessness characteristic of a fanatic who is constantly engaged in eradicating from himself any vestige of spontaneous human feeling. He had Rijkov dismissed from his job and ordered all his property and possessions confiscated. For a Communist there can be no gratitude towards a capitalist or anyone in the trusted service of capitalism. To a Communist such people are by definition inhuman and unworthy: it is never a question of whether to destroy them, simply of when to destroy them.

So Rijkov, with his wife and children, became destitute. Somehow they managed to escape to Turkey, and from there made their way to Czechoslovakia where they settled. Rijkov worked hard and gave his family a good home. A confirmed enemy of communism for the rest of his life, Rijkov tried to bring his children up accordingly. He tried to teach them that tyranny was always bad, whatever name it was given; that the end does not justify the means; that systems of government are as fallible as the men who make them. But with Gregori he did not succeed.

Gregori graduated from college as a hydraulics engineer shortly before the German invasion of Czechoslovakia and

obtained a good job with František-Pajout in Prague. He made good progress in the firm and became well liked by the owner, old Pajout himself, who eventually appointed him chief engineer. One day, during the German occupation, Pajout returned to Prague from a weekend at his country house and sent for Gregori. He told him that, during the night before last, he had been visited by a band of Russian guerrillas. They were friendly and all they wanted was help and medical attention for a badly wounded comrade. Pajout had given them all the help he could. Were they not fighting the hated Nazis?

When Gregori heard this he became as if electrified with excitement. More than anything he wished that he could have been with Pajout that weekend to meet and help these Russians to whom his heart reached out in spontaneous sympathy that had nothing to do with ideologies or politics or war. Here, close at hand, were his blood brothers, men of his race, in need of help. Without further reflection he asked Pajout to let him go with him to his country house next weekend to make contact with these Russians. Pajout agreed to this but pointed out that he could not guarantee a meeting. These men were at war; they would not come again unless they needed something. But they knew Pajout would be there again next weekend and the chances were that they would need something. It was hard to live off the land.

For Gregori the next four days seemed interminable. But at last he was in Pajout's country house, waiting. When night fell his excitement increased. Even if he had wanted to he could not have slept. He and Pajout dined and went into the library, where the guerrillas had first contacted Pajout. The light in the library window, Pajout said, was the signal that all was clear.

Pajout settled down calmly to wait. He took down a book and soon seemed lost in it. But Gregori could not read at such a time. He just waited, his eyes on the windows, his ears latching hopefully onto every sound. At last there was a rap on the window, so sudden to Gregori, who had heard no one approach, that he almost cried out. Pajout quickly opened the French windows and three men came into the room.

In these three men, strong, alert and confident, sparked with that magic vitality that comes when every day survived is a victory won, Gregori saw the sons of Rurik, first ruler of Russia. In these unshaven, dirty, seemingly reckless, un-

doubtedly brave men, Gregori saw the wild, honest Northmen of history, legend and myth. Enough for him that he should be asked to help and be able!

For Gregori, communism was an affair of the heart, not the head. It was a by-product— though nonetheless real for all that—of some deeper need. Gregori talked to these guerrillas and eventually met their chief. The chief was only too willing and able to give Gregori all the “right” answers to anxious questions on “the truth” about Communist Russia. When invited to do so, Gregori readily signed a promise to act as a foreign agent for Soviet Intelligence. When asked to choose a sobriquet he chose Vaclav, ironically enough the name of one of Czechoslovakia’s greatest patriots.

I visited Gregori several times in his home and became very fond of his seven-year-old daughter; more fond of her perhaps because I could easily visualize the disappointments and suffering that would meet her on the path that her misguided father had already chosen for her: the path that led into the Soviet trap. Gregori talked to his daughter a great deal about the Russia of his own dreams, always glorifying it, until, to her trusting little mind, there could be no wrong in Russia. I knew that when at last she did see wrong in Russia, and could not deny it, it would be attributed to someone else’s fault. This is the attitude of the indoctrinated ones. They refuse to be disillusioned because their illusions are too precious to them. They abhor the vacuum of uncertainty.

To hear Gregori used to make me sad, but there was nothing I could do. The last thing I could do was correct Gregori or in any way show up Soviet affairs in an unfavorable light. If I had done this, even though he did not know exactly who I was or my post in the NKGB, Gregori, in his zeal, would have found some way to denounce me. He had been infected by the Red Virus, and his infection could be fatal, to others as well as himself.

Although my duties in Prague were, in a sense, only a preparation for a future mission, my superiors took them very seriously and certainly used me to full capacity in the effort to achieve the Sovietization of Czechoslovakia. But my position was almost unique in Soviet terms, for I was acting on my own, without surveillance, in a foreign country. Communism does not trust the individual, and sur-

veillance is therefore very seldom dispensed with, even though the costs of maintaining it may be absurdly high. I was therefore, in that sense, in a position of greater trust than such a well known figure as Valerian Zorin, at that time Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, later Soviet representative to the Security Council of the United Nations and then Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union. This ostensibly highly responsible and trusted representative of the Soviet Union was kept under constant surveillance by members of his own staff among whom were several officers of Soviet State Security.

I worked alone, but since I knew only too well how highly surveillance is valued and the lengths the Communists are prepared to go to insure it, I was constantly on my guard with every single person I had to deal with or even met quite casually. Casual encounters are so often far less casual than they seem. Several times, I know, attempts were made by apparent strangers to provoke me into committing or voicing some indiscretion; several times I was subjected to this "testing." Sometimes it was easy to see straight off what was going on, at other times not so easy. Then I could only be sure later. I once met a man, seemingly quite by chance, and we got into conversation. He was a pleasant, affable man of Czech nationality. We talked about the war and what would happen after the peace. He mentioned that he could give me an opportunity to earn good money at an interesting job. He was a merchant and eager to re-open old business connections. He wanted a good man to represent him in Switzerland. Quite noncommittally I asked for his name and telephone. After we parted I waited a day and phoned the number he gave me. He was not known there. Girls used sometimes to take a vacant seat beside me at a restaurant and show a desire to be friendly. Some were perhaps innocent, some were prostitutes: the others were watching me on behalf of the NKGB.

Meanwhile my own spies, and their contacts in turn, were doing their jobs. Rijkov, apart from reporting anything of possible interest or value to me, had to get my Czech naturalization papers through as quickly as possible. His personal contacts made him the most suitable for this particular assignment. Number 9, Police Chief of Dobžiš, kept a close watch on Count Mansfeld and reported the names of all people in his area who were in any way sym-

pathetic towards the Western Powers. Stepanek, the manager of the Steiner Hotel, had installed a listening-in system in every room of the hotel so that conversations between guests and visitors could be recorded. Any interesting conversations were reported, as well as any interesting contents of suitcases which were all surreptitiously searched. Brigadier-General Beranek's principal function as far as I was concerned was to give me the names of all Czech military personnel who had ever been connected with the Czech Armored Brigade, formed under United States supervision, and the Czech Air Force, formed by Czech patriots in Great Britain. The others were all engaged in preparing their own black lists from the varied information that came into their possession.

I met each of my spies once a week, and each one always had plenty of information to pass on to me. From their reports I had to collate and condense the data, code it, with the assistance of Marina my cypher expert, and send it off to the NKGB in Kiev. Most of the information, as per my orders, concerned people who had shown signs of having sympathies with the West: people who would eventually have to be somehow rendered harmless to the Soviet purpose. They would have to be either eliminated, jailed, deported, somehow discredited or ruined, and there were many hundreds of them.

Now, in order to achieve its purpose, the Soviet Union, ably assisted by all active members of the Czech Communist Party, made full use not only of the more orthodox methods of espionage, sabotage, propaganda and naked power but also of the whispering campaign, false rumor and organized ridicule. All groups who were not pro-Communist were open to subtle attack by the method of discrediting its leaders and prominent members in the eyes of their fellow members and followers. Individuals were picked to pieces and any weak point in their make-up exploited to full advantage. To help in doing this the Communists found all sorts of unexpected allies: there were many people whose principles were for sale, many petty opportunists whose despised but necessary services could be bought for next to nothing, sometimes just for a promise as empty as their own cheap souls. These people would spread the rumors and would mostly be believed as no one knew of their interest. And if a real weakness were found

in the private life of someone under attack then it was built up to monstrous size, out of all proportion to its real importance in any sane assessment of the man. The picture, for example, that was painted of Jan Masaryk, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was of a debauchee so gripped by his secret vices that he would betray his country for a beautiful woman and a few bottles of wine. A Czech tanks officer who had trained in the U.S.A. and retained an enthusiasm for American music was deliberately reduced to ridicule among his men by being dubbed "the dancing master"; a respected family man, the father of several children, had committed an adulterous indiscretion and, on this being discovered, so much was made of it that his employers were eventually forced to remove him from the executive post he occupied and replace him—with someone the Communists found suitable; a Czech pilot, it was discovered, had learned during his stay in Britain to appreciate English poetry and this cultural "failing" was so represented as if it must reveal a yellow streak, a touch of effeminacy in his character, so that it was soon possible to have it generally believed that he was a secret homosexual. Such cases were without number and though individually not very important, in their mass they had the very successful effect of destroying trust and arousing easy suspicion by everyone of everyone else. It was, in fact, a very effective social poison.

Now it may be wondered at that there were so many pro-western Czechs after what happened at Munich, but the reason is not hard to find. Communization was being carried out very fast. In the Sudeten area particularly, where the Communist Party had always been very strong, the population now found itself treated with that total disregard for individual liberty that is characteristic of the Soviet Union. The principal industries and banks were nationalized and trades union leaders no longer represented their union members. They were their new bosses, and they in turn took orders from their bosses at the top of the Party. Old sympathy for communism was repaid by brutality and injustice from communism. Skilled workers earning 2,500 crowns a month were angered that a union boss, remote and, as far as the workers' interests were concerned, ineffectual, should have a free car, all sorts of perquisites and a salary of 40,000 crowns. Resentment

against communism bred the concomitant sympathy with the West.

During the time I spent in Czechoslovakia I saw many things that angered me, though why they should have done so I did not at first understand. The truth is that before going to Prague I would not have been unduly worried by the sight of what was, after all, simply the rule of power. But to see this cultured and civilized people being surely bent under the yoke of Soviet domination, to see them being forced to accept the Soviet system and way of life when their own had been demonstrably so much better, was somehow pitiful. I realized that my feelings about life and the common people were undergoing the final stages of a complete change. Meanwhile, all I could do was to carry out my job and wait for established officialdom to come through with my Czech citizenship papers.

FOURTEEN

HOW MUCH TIME?

THEN I suddenly got the news from Borovichko that the Count's castle had been searched by the SNB, the Czech Security Police. There was nothing for it but to await the outcome. Next day came more news. The Count had been arrested. He had been brought to Prague and put in the Pankrač Prison.

Without delay I radioed the news to Kiev, pleading for immediate action to get the Count released, and impatiently awaited a reply. The reply I got was, in its way, a terrible document.

Liberation Count impossible. Reasons follow. Guarantee Count will not talk. Expect visit Captain Trusov.

A month passed. It was already February 1946 when Captain Trusov came from Kiev. He brought a message from Colonel of State Security Pogrebnoi, who directly controlled the concerted movement of which my Prague outfit was a part. He was the same Pogrebnoi who had conducted the massacre of those 5,000 Polish officers in the Katyn Forest in order to deplete the Polish army of its officer corps.

According to Trusov, Pogrebnoi had moved heaven and earth through Commissar Savchenko in an effort to get Moscow to instruct Gottwald through Party channels to release the Count. The request had been refused regretfully, though firmly, because to do so would be irreparably bad for Gottwald's personal prestige. It was felt that Gottwald had acted hastily, far too hastily, but the fact was that he had acted, and it would be quite impossible now for him to undo what he had done without damaging his own and the Party's prestige. The Communist Party in Czechoslovakia had not yet won its victory and whatever Gottwald did must remain done. The NKGB, nonetheless, would welcome the Count's release if it could come about

in a way that might save Gottwald's face, such as if the Count voluntarily offered up his estates, for instance.

"He will never do it," I told Trusov glumly.

"That is what Colonel Pogrebnoi said," replied Trusov; "and that is why he must be liquidated."

My heart sank.

"How?" I asked, more to conceal the hiatus in my thoughts than anything else.

"We have our men in Pankrač prison. The Count has a tubercular condition of the lungs, you know, and this will be fatally aggravated by the cold and humidity of his quarters and by drugs and poisons in his food. This has already been started and the Count should not last more than a few weeks anyhow at most. There is no other practicable way, you see."

"So that is that," I said, as though prepared to dismiss the matter from my mind.

"There is a special message which Colonel Pogrebnoi asked me to transmit to you verbally in these words: *cultivate another man and advise.*" He paused a second looking at me and then asked, "What does it mean?"

"It is enough for me, Comrade, to have the message," I said.

But I could think of no one to cultivate for the escape in place of the Count. This gentle, melancholy-mannered aristocrat had attracted me from the first. In the few times that I had been with him he had done nothing but add luster to the first impression. I admired his unostentatious courage, the mild inflexibility of his will, the mature discipline of his intellect and the naturalness of his personal charm and dignity. The more I had come to know him the more paradoxical it had seemed to me that he should ever have signed a promise to work for the NKGB. Had he known what he was signing? Had he been deceived? I could not imagine what trick of circumstance had persuaded him to sign the promise of his own free will, and yet other than of his own free will it could never have been signed.

He had refused to co-operate with the Nazis, refused their overt offers of friendship, their heel-clicking, head-bowing attentions. His was an ancient and noble German name, for he sprang from a family known since the eleventh century, and was of the *echt Deutsches Adelstand*, a natural member of the *Herrenvolk*, so they could not un-

derstand why he chose to despise them. Finally, Gauleiter Frank had lost his patience and had the Count evicted from his castle. The Count joined the resistance. He was a Czech patriot, but not a fanatic. Above everything he was a free man. And yet he had signed the promise to the NKGB!

I wanted to help him. I wanted to earn and receive his respect and personal gratitude. His was a friendship I felt I wanted, needed. Perhaps I had needed friendship all my life since my father's arrest, but had taught myself to do without it and the need had never been insistent, had never bothered me. It did now, though; and I felt I could not dismiss the Count from my mind as my superiors in Kiev required. I must take one last chance, make one last effort. It would not be true if I said I was thinking only of the Count in this, though it is true that thoughts of him did predominate. He was the ideal man for me to escape with—for my own ultimate purposes. I knew we could easily come to an understanding as soon as we had got safely outside the Soviet orbit of control, especially if I were to help him now. I must help him.

Trusov left town and I was alone again. Meanwhile the Count was dying. I then did something I should never have done. It was against my instructions, but knowing the NKGB did not want to lose Count Mansfeld and was prepared to do so only because there seemed to be no other way out, I thought it justifiable to take the risk.

I went to see Valerian Zorin, the Soviet ambassador. At first the clerks and guards at the embassy did not wish to let me see him, but I pressed it so hard that he was informed and decided to receive me. I told him my name but nothing else. I said I wished to speak about Count Mansfeld and that after he had heard me out he could get in touch with Dekanozov, assistant to Molotov in Moscow. Zorin did not know, but I knew that Dekanozov was the NGB (former NKGB) representative to the upper hierarchy of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Zorin agreed to hear me out.

I put it to him like this. Mansfeld had been arrested on a stupid charge that had no foundation in fact but was rigged to serve a purpose too hastily conceived. He was actually a supporter of the Communist Party and it would be a tremendous asset politically to have his support of it.

This he would give, in spite of what had happened, if the matter were diplomatically handled. Zorin listened and promised he would see what could be done.

I did not hear from him, but two days after my visit I received a message from Pogrebnoi telling me to obey orders and not start acting on my own in a way that would only result in friction at a high level in Moscow or serious consequences for myself.

To me it was a loss. To them it was no more than just another human life. Stalin had once said that a single death is a tragedy, a million deaths merely statistics.

It was the end of March 1946. During my work I had come across some cases of Czech nationals getting accepted by the French to serve in the Foreign Legion. I had reported this for what it was worth to Kiev and no doubt the possibility of this continuing after the Communist Party gained full power would be ruled out immediately. Meanwhile, I was so distressed with the dashing of my plans for escape that I wondered whether the Foreign Legion might not offer a way out for me.

Taking great care not to make my visit in any way conspicuous I went to the French Embassy and asked for the representative of the Special Repatriation Committee. As soon as I was taken to him I told him what I wanted. He did not even ask what my nationality was, or my name. He said I would be acceptable provided I could give proof of physical fitness. Could I be ready, he asked, by the end of May? Nothing sooner? I asked. Nothing sooner.

It was too late, of course. Two days later I received instructions to return from Prague and leave my spies to be taken over either on my return or by anyone who could address them by their pseudonyms.

I took out the radio transmitter sets and buried them, and I burned the cyphers. Having said goodbye to the members of my group I took the express to Košice. It was April 1, 1946.

This chance was lost. Now time would come between me and freedom—or failure. I wondered how much time there would have to be.

I changed trains at Košice and proceeded another eighteen miles on foot to Kralchomec.

It was better so because I did not want to be intercepted by the Czech frontier guards. I could have no power with them and they might jail me for illegally trying to cross the border. But it would not be difficult to cross the frontier without being seen by the Czechs; they knew that the Soviet guards on the other side were extremely zealous and that saved them a lot of trouble.

I was dressed in plus-fours and carried a rucksack, a very common dress in that part of the country, so that I did not look conspicuous as I walked along the road like a hiker. In my rucksack I had water and food for a full day at least and in my trousers pocket I had a small automatic pistol. I walked steadily some twelve miles along the road to Uzhgorod, all through the day and well into the night, before I judged that I must be near the frontier. Then I started out across the fields, over the higher ground, leaving the road behind me. I stopped for a while near a hedge, drank water, and buried any papers I had that connected me with Prague or Czechoslovakia. Then I continued very slowly, all eyes and ears, with pauses to make sure of silence and the nature of dim noises. I suppose I must have covered little more than a mile in over an hour when I heard the baying of a large dog. The sound came from where the wind came, so it meant no danger for me. It meant that the Soviet border guards must be quite near for they used dogs and the Czechs did not. I walked on slowly.

I distinguished a little on my right, propped on concrete piles near a path, an old railway carriage. There was a chink of light showing under the door and as I approached it carefully I heard a voice talking in Russian. I could not distinguish the words, but the sound was Russian. I walked boldly up to the door and opened it, and a sergeant of frontier troops jumped up from a chair behind a deal table.

"Who the . . ."

"Please take me to the officer commanding this frontier post immediately, Sergeant," I ordered peremptorily.

"Who are you to order me?"

"Do what I say or you will regret it. Here, take this pistol. I am a friend."

The man obeyed and, covering me with his own pistol,

he led me out of the carriage, leaving a trooper in charge. We walked across a field, along a hedge and down a dirt road. Soon we came to a stone cottage, the command post. There I was shown to a lieutenant, to whom the sergeant told how I had presented myself.

"And where did you come from?" the lieutenant asked me.

"From the other side of the frontier," I answered.

"Who is patrolling that area?" the lieutenant asked the sergeant.

"Semyonov and Domchenko together, Comrade Lieutenant."

"Have them both put under arrest." Then he turned to me again. "Who are you?"

"I am not answering any questions, Comrade Lieutenant," I said. "I suggest you do not waste your time and mine. Kindly let me have the use of your telephone for a few minutes. I assure you I am not going to try and run away."

"I insist on your answering my question, my friend," said the lieutenant angrily. "Then I shall judge what is to be done with you."

"Lieutenant," I warned him, as gravely as I could, "you are dealing with something you do not understand. Let me use that telephone and you will create no trouble for yourself."

He considered a minute and then consented, watching me closely as I asked the operator for the number. I called Major Makarov, chief of the First Section of the Sub-Carpathian MGB Section, whom I knew personally, and got through to him immediately. I said it was Shishkin speaking, and told him where I was and that I needed his help.

"I will be down in an hour," he said. "Wait there for me."

I smiled at the lieutenant.

"May I sit down?" I asked. "I have to wait here for about an hour."

An hour later, when a large limousine drove up the dirt road and stopped in front of the command post, the lieutenant's doubts were relieved when a uniformed major of MGB sprang out of this car and shook my hand. Indeed he was positively obsequious, apologizing for any incon-

venience caused and so forth, returning me my pistol and shaking my hand.

From then on it was a question of routine and things went fast. By car to Uzhgorod, by plane to Kiev.

FIFTEEN

THE MERCHANT NAVY

I SOON learned that Zorin had taken Gottwald's part. Molotov, too. The purpose of my actions was inquired into by Dekanozov. During this, Sverdlov was asked about me and did all he could to present me as undisciplined and unreliable.

Pogrebnoi gave me a stern talking to in Kiev MGB headquarters. I listened silently. I had been imprudent, I had been rash, I had acted like a hysterical woman. By one stupid act I had spoiled the excellent work of months. Everyone had agreed that I had carried out my duties in the best tradition of the service and my promotion to major should be a matter of months. But in going to see Valerian Zorin I had done something that would postpone that. Moscow had wanted my arrest. Only my immediate removal from the scene had saved me from this, but I would have to lie low. I must stay in Kiev or go somewhere for a while on work not connected with the First Department.

How I cursed myself!

The same night I went privately to Kulagin and asked him what I could do. I did not want to remain in Kiev, I said, rotting away at some desk job if I could be of any use elsewhere.

"Would you like the merchant navy for a while, until things blow over?" he asked.

At once I saw a new possibility to escape. I became like a machine, careful not to make mistakes.

"Can you arrange that?" I asked.

"I think so."

And he did. With Savchenko's approval he wrote a letter to a good friend of his, Colonel Gavrish, deputy chief of the MGB department of Odessa city and province, asking him to arrange for my entry into the merchant navy.

Savchenko subsequently authorized the preparation of

false documents attesting my "demobilization" from the MGB Ukraine, which I should use with people who had nothing to do with the MGB. Towards the end of April I left Kiev for Odessa. I took with me another letter to Major Kostetsky, chief of the First Section of MGB in Odessa, but I never had to use it.

Colonel Gavrish arranged things very well. He immediately saw to it, through the Chief of the Third Section of MGB, which controls port and maritime personnel among other things, that I was sent to a training ship—an old bomb-damaged but miraculously unsunken hulk called the *Krimea*—to take a two months' course as an ordinary seaman.

As soon as the course was over, a group of us was detached to join a ship in Leningrad. That ship, the *Sestroretsk*, would take us as passengers to Stockholm where we would pick up our own ship, the *Petrodvorets*, that was being refitted by the Swedes. In that ship we would sail round the coast of Europe and to the Black Sea. Everything seemed to be working very nicely.

We all took the train from Odessa under our new captain, and were to change trains at Moscow and proceed immediately to Leningrad.

Before leaving Odessa I had been approached by the Third Section and asked to be their spy on board the ship we were to join. They already had two there, they said, one of whom was the third deck officer, but there was no need for them to know I was the third. Of course, I agreed. There is no alternative in such matters, and certainly not for me at that stage of developments. If they had asked me to cut off a toe as a condition of my getting this chance to escape I would have done it. Nonetheless, like all the other members of the crew, I signed the usual promises demanded of sailors: that I should talk to no foreigners and never leave the ship except in company of at least two other sailors.

When we changed trains at Moscow we had to wait over an hour and a half. Here was a chance. In this time I could easily pay a brief visit to my mother. But should I go? For several minutes I could not make up my mind. I was afraid that the sight of my mother and little brother would sap the strength from my purpose. I did not know whether I could bear to look upon the only two people left in the world whom I loved knowing that, by my act, I was condemning

them both to suffering. But I finally decided that I must see Mother this last time.

I went to a friend's house and asked him to telephone my mother and tell her that I wanted to meet her in his house. She came at once.

When she arrived I was shocked to see how old and worn she looked. She gazed at me a little vaguely for a while, so that I somehow felt that I had become a stranger to her. Then she began to cry, quite silently. I am sure that she knew, intuitively, that this would be the last time she saw me. I comforted her and asked her about Volodia, who was now twelve years old. He was well, my mother said, but not happy. The neighbors' children and the children at school were forever taunting him and calling him the son of an enemy of the people, and he took this very much to heart.

Soon, strangely soon, we had nothing more to say to each other. We sat facing each other in silence for a few minutes, then I got up from my chair and kissed her. "I must go now, Mother," I said, and walked out of the room. I left her sitting there, a poor, lonely and pathetic figure. In my mind she is still as I last saw her. But, of course, that cannot be. If she is still alive, I prefer not to speculate where she now is or what has happened to her. Leaving my friend's house I rejoined the ship's crew at the station.

We embarked without incident on July 7, sailed for Stockholm and arrived there on July 10. We traveled second-class and ate with the crew. Our officers went first class. The food was excellent, the voyage calm and we had nothing to do but rest and talk. We of the crew were not allowed to drink and some of us missed our vodka. On the other hand, the officers drank as much and as often as they liked.

On arrival we were immediately trans-shipped to our own ship, the *Petrodvorets*, even though it was not ready yet. The accommodation was ready and we were able to admire the neatness, cleanliness and privacy (two men per cabin for'ard) of our quarters. This was according to the Finnish style, as the ship had been taken from Finland as reparations. Russian ships did not afford any but the most rudimentary comfort to their crews.

We began to stand watches on board the ship, which lay in dock, and to do odd bits of work that were not already being attended to by the Swedes. We were also given daily

lectures on seamanship and navigation by our officers, and were allowed ashore.

But we were odd tourists, we sailors. We were not allowed to talk to people, were not allowed to be entertained by them. All of us bought things, but with a minimum of conversation. We did not get to know the town as a free man would. We saw the Engelbrektskyrkan, with its high tower, we saw the bridges that linked the different parts of the city—Gamla Staden, Norrmalm and Kungsholm—we saw the well-stocked shops and the fair, well-dressed inhabitants. Everything impressed us. The people tried to be friendly to us and were puzzled at our reserve.

Their friendliness towards us for my private purposes, however, was not a good sign. Their government had entered into large-scale trading with ours, and our ship was being refitted under contract. This was no situation conducive to a successful request for asylum on my part. Just as Sweden had wanted no part in the war, she would want no part in post-war complications. I did not even consider seriously the possibility of deserting in Sweden. On its trip around Europe the ship would call in at Gibraltar. That would be my place to jump ship. Spain would be so very near, and Spain was consistently anti-Communist. I would get asylum there without the least difficulty.

Three months passed and I waited patiently for the refitting to be completed and the ship to resume its course.

Then a telegram arrived and ship's orders were changed. The contract with the Swedish shipbuilders had been broken and we would sail to Liepaja to finish refitting there. Liepaja is a Soviet port. We would be leaving in three days.

I made up my mind as soon as I heard the news. There was no other way for it. I would jump in Sweden.

During the next three days I acted out a little comedy. I did everything I could think of to avoid arousing any vestige of suspicion and to make people think that I was rather glad that we were going home already. I gave money to the steward, asking him to purchase cigarettes for me for the return trip; I bought one or two trinkets which I showed around as presents for my mother in Moscow, and, on the last day, I counted my money out and said that I must go ashore to buy a good coat for myself. It was the last shore leave and several of us went in a party after lunch on Saturday, the 21st. First of all I, and the whole little party with me, went to a

clothing store and there I took great pains to select and buy a coat, making the others impatient at the delay. Then, with my wrapped-up coat under my arm, I went with the others wherever they wanted to go, alert for an opportunity. It came when we all walked into a large Woolworth-style store, called Nordiska Kompaniet, that was extremely crowded. When we got into the crush of people I pretended to be interested in some merchandise lying on a counter and let the others walk on ahead. They had not seen me. Slowly, still feigning interest in the merchandise around me, I made my way to one of the exits and got away.

I was alone. It was late afternoon and the long twilight was beginning. I had decided what I would do. The Swedes were too neutral. Perhaps the Americans? It was no safe bet, but I saw no alternative. I walked quickly to the corner of the street where a policeman stood on point duty.

"Bitte," I said. "Wo ist die amerikanische Botschaft?"

He was surprised.

"Sind Sie kein Russischer?" he asked.

"Jawohl. Aber, bitte, ich muss da schnell hin."

Without further delay he told me where I could find the American Embassy. I walked there, my parcel under my arm, calmly so as not to attract attention. It was closed. But there was a porter there and from him I got the private address of the assistant U.S. Military Attaché, a certain Captain Robb.

More than a little surprised to see me at the door of his apartment, Captain Robb, with a charming frankness of manner, asked me into the hall. I soon found he spoke no German, and as I spoke no English then, conversation was practically impossible. He understood that I was a Russian, but that seemed to mean very little to him. Finally, urgently, I put the thing to him as simply as I could.

"Ya," I said pointing, with both hands at my chest. "Ya En-kah-vay-day, en-kah-vay-day. Amerikanen," I continued, pointing to him, "mich nehmen. Ich will, ich will." This while bowing to him and crossing my closed fists as though my wrists were bound. It must have looked very funny, but he did not laugh.

"Oh," he said, and then, taking me by the arm, led me to a chair and motioned for me to sit down. He then went to the telephone and had a conversation during which I heard

him say two or three times, "En-kay-vee-dee." I recognized the meaning.

Putting the receiver down he wrote out something for me on a sheet of paper. But I could not read his writing, the Roman cursive script being so different from the Russian. I made signs of not understanding it, and by writing a few Roman block capitals, pointing to them and nodding furiously, I managed to get him to write his message in block letters.

It was the address of a Colonel Wanderley, the Military Attaché.

"Colonel Wanderley spreck Doitch," he said with a smile and led me to the door. He offered me money for a taxi, but I refused.

Outside on the street again, I showed the scrap of paper to one or two passersby and soon found the address.

Indeed, Colonel Wanderley spoke good German. At least, it was much better than mine. I laid my cards on the table before him, showing him my private documents, and told him who I was. Finally I gave him my documents and he promised to have them returned to me in due course. He listened carefully and then telephoned for two young Americans of his staff. They came around immediately.

"These gentlemen will take care of you," the Colonel said. "I must ask you to remain quiet for a couple of days and don't worry. I will get someone from Allied headquarters to carry out a proper interrogation. You may rest assured that if you tell the truth and do not try to conceal anything your future will be assured. You will be taken to the United States and, if you like, you will get a job as an adviser on Soviet affairs. Eventually you will be able to obtain American citizenship."

I left his house with the two young men and there was gladness in my heart. I had chosen right. The Americans were good people and would look after me. I was already saved, the rest was simply formality.

The two young Americans took me to a furnished apartment and saw that I was at home there.

"Promise you will stay here," said one, and of course I promised. They showed me a cupboard where there was whisky, and in the kitchen there was a refrigerator with bottles of soda water in it and cubes of ice. They said my dinner

would be sent up to me shortly, and then they left me alone.

I took a drink or two, had my dinner, which was not long in coming, and was able to relax completely. I slept well that night.

Next day one of the young Americans came to see me. He said my ship was still in the harbor. So they were waiting for me. No members of the crew had been allowed ashore, the American said. No, they wouldn't be.

Later on in the day, another American came to see me. He had a slight knowledge of Russian. He was a charming fellow and said that he had come to keep me company so that my waiting would not wear on my nerves. He had brought along a chess board and chessmen and we played a few games together, stopping only to eat and have a drink now and again. We talked of the recent shooting down of American planes in Yugoslavia.

At around ten o'clock that night the expert from Allied headquarters arrived. He was fat and almost entirely bald. He spoke fluent Russian. We sat down in two armchairs with a center table between us, on which he placed a bottle of whisky and a pad of paper. He smiled at me in a friendly manner, but there was something about it I did not like. There were just the two of us together in the room, the other American having gone outside.

"Let us have a few drinks," he suggested, "and talk about Russia."

I complied and we talked idly enough about life in the Soviet Union. Together we almost finished the bottle of whisky. It was after midnight already, and there had been no interrogation. I did not trust the prolonged delay. What is wrong? I wondered apprehensively. He was pleasant and polite enough, to be sure, but there was something about those little eyes, eyes like a wild boar's, cunning but not wise.

Suddenly he put his glass down and said in a flat, yet strangely ominous voice:

"I am afraid I will have to hand you in to the Soviet Embassy."

I said nothing, but there was a buzzing in my ears and my blood tingled with a sudden energy to fight.

"Unless," he went on, "unless you tell me everything I ask you."

I was annoyed at this cheap trickery in the face of my perfect good faith.

"I did not come all this way to tell lies," I said, a little rudely.

"Let us begin then," he said, and there was no trace of pleasantness in him now. "Give me the names of all the spies you know who work against the Allies."

"By chance I can give you the names of a few colleagues because I happened to know them, and I believe them to be in the United States, Japan and your zone of Germany. But there are thousands more, and I know nothing of them, nor would I have been permitted to know."

"Listen," he said threateningly, "I am giving you your last chance. Either you stop playing with me or I hand you back to your masters."

"I will give you the names of those I know and many unknown to you," I said. "I can also give you plans of future methods of operation against the West, which may be of more importance to you. If you delay until Moscow knows of my defection they will immediately do their utmost to reduce the value of any names I can give you. I suggest you take notes."

He did not take notes, so how could he be serious?

"I want the names," he insisted, "of all Soviet spies you know to be working against the West. Why did you give yourself up to the U.S. Embassy if you don't know details about your own spy network?"

"Because I believe that information concerning the structure, methods and plans of the MGB is of as much interest to your great nation as a list of names."

"You are a liar!" He stood up suddenly and started to leave. He did not shake my hand but strode right out of the apartment and slammed the door behind him.

This was bad, really bad. I waited in a state of pent-up nervous tension until I felt he must have left the building. Then I sprang up and left the apartment, went down the stairs and out into the street.

Everything had gone wrong. They did not believe me. They were stupid. I must get away. Get away. Get away where? Where?

Alone in the early black, frosty hours of the morning, I walked through the streets of this clean and decent city. I was desperate.

But what was I to do? Go to the Swedes? I laughed at myself for the thought. That would be worse than useless, especially after having been so unsuccessful with the Americans.

I was in a strange land, among strange people. They did not think as I did. They did not regard me as one of themselves and did not care if I lived or died. I was stupid for ever having hoped they would.

I was more really alone than I had ever been before. The world to which I belonged, in which I had grown up, I rejected. I rejected it because of something in me that wanted, needed to find where I genuinely belonged, a subjective, personal fulfillment. I had thought to find the means to it in the only other world I knew, the world outside the Soviet Union. But I had been wrong. I was not to be accepted there. I was an outcast, a man without roots. I must do something, I must go somewhere. But where, where?

My documents!

Without my documents I could not go to the Swedes, the British or anyone. No, I had chosen the Americans and I must stick with them. Surely they would not, could not let things end so stupidly. I decided to go back to the assistant Military Attaché, the American who had treated me so well all the way through.

It must have been shortly before six in the morning when I knocked at Captain Robb's door. He had just got out of bed and his hair was all tousled. He was perplexed and obviously startled to see me at his door, but he motioned me to come in and left me seated in his drawing room. I heard him telephoning, then he came back and we smoked a cigarette. He did not even attempt conversation. Unexpectedly, an elderly Swedish woman came into the room and served us hot coffee. It did me a great deal of good. Then the American who knew some Russian came in and, shaking my hand, asked me what had happened.

I told him of the stupid interrogation, the despair that I felt at not being believed when I was acting with the greatest good faith and absolute sincerity, and how I had gone out not knowing what to do. He translated everything to Captain Robb who listened calmly and without comment. I asked what would happen to me, where my documents were. The young American smiled. I must not worry, he said. Then they talked to each other for a little while and the

American said that he would come with me back to the apartment I had left a few hours before.

We spent most of the day together and I found him a most pleasant companion. I had completely recovered myself and was determined to see things through to the end, and I was not even disturbed when he said it was a pity that last night's interrogation had ended like it had because the man who had interrogated me was a very important man and had already flown back to Germany.

For the next two days I was not left alone in the flat. Then the Russian-speaking American told me:

"Good news. You are going to America for further questioning; everything will be all right there. There is a plane leaving in an hour and we want you to fly on it."

This was good news indeed. I stood up with a light heart.

I shook him by the hand in expression of my gladness. But again I felt something odd, something not quite as it should be. Was it in his handclasp, in the flicker of his eyes? Had he been surprised and a little embarrassed by my demonstrativeness? These Anglo-Saxons were strange people.

We went downstairs together and walked out into the street towards a car parked before the entrance. The American had barely opened the door when a tall Swede came up from behind us and tapped me on the shoulder. The Swede took out a badge and showed it to me. He spoke in German:

"Herr Anatoli Mickailovich Granovsky?"

"Jawohl."

"You are under arrest."

Then the American turned to me with a smile and shook my hand.

"Goodbye, Anatoli," he said. "Do not worry. If you are not a liar everything will be all right in the end. Good luck."

My blood froze in my veins. But what could I do? The Swedish policeman brought me to a parked car. I took a cigarette from him. I realized that I had been silly to believe that I could actually have been smuggled out of the country by the Americans. They were not conquerors here, they were guests in a friendly state. The Swedes had every right to hold me. There was nothing I could do. Only wait.

SIXTEEN

THE DOOR TO FREEDOM

IT WAS October 1, and I was once more in jail. The Swedes asked me for what remained in my pockets. They had given me night clothes, soap, a towel, a toothbrush and a razor and put me into a cell in the police station. I was exercised daily and the meals were good. But no one showed any interest in me at all.

So several days passed, and I remained alone. Time ticked by and I waited. Then, on October 3, I was taken out of the cell and brought to an office where I was asked to give my answers to a complete printed questionnaire. As the questions were translated for me by an interpreter, I saw they were what one might ask an illegal entrant to Sweden, scarcely a political refugee. I therefore asked to be excused from filling in the form, and said that I would be more than willing to write out a complete statement. The superintendent came into the room and politely asked me where I was born, who my parents were, what position I occupied and then consented to my request, promising me an immediate supply of writing materials. I thought how different this treatment was from that meted out during interrogations in the Lubianka and Butirki prisons of Moscow.

I was removed to Langholmen Prison. For four days I carefully marshalled my thoughts and transferred them to paper, steadily, chronologically presenting myself and the reason for my action. As soon as I was ready I handed the statement over to a translator.

Meanwhile, more interest was being taken in me. One officer in particular used to talk to me quite a lot in German. We expressed ourselves haltingly, I needing the contact more than he.

On September 25, when I was still with the Americans in their apartment, a note from the Soviet Ambassador, Chernishev, was delivered to the Swedish Foreign Minister.

The Swedish authorities courteously showed the text of it to me and I remember it went as follows:—

"On September 21, 1946, a seaman from the Soviet ship *Petrodvorets*, Granovsky, Anatoli Mickailovich, who left the ship with other sailors to visit Stockholm city, did not return to the ship. The Soviet Embassy does not contemplate the possibility that Seaman Granovsky has deserted his duties. Presumably he has suffered some accident and the Soviet Embassy begs the Minister for Foreign Affairs to give the necessary orders for the Swedish police to find out the whereabouts of Soviet Seaman Granovsky."

I began to get more encouragement. The Swedes said the same as the Americans: tell the truth and you may have a good chance; lie and you are finished. In the Soviet Union it had been practically the other way around.

More days passed. Then around mid-October I was officially informed that the Soviet Embassy had made a request to speak to me personally. I refused immediately, without hesitation. In his turn, the Soviet Ambassador accused the Swedish authorities of illicitly detaining a Soviet citizen. The Swedes then asked me to see the diplomats and tell them that I was in prison of my own free will. I agreed because it was clear that my refusal would put the Swedes in an embarrassing position.

Next day I was told to go up to the Prison Director's office. When I got there I found the Assistant Director sitting at his desk and two strange men seated near him. The men got up and extended their hands to me. I did not take them, but looked at them both enquiringly.

"Good morning, Comrade," said one of them in Russian. "Do not be nervous, I am the first secretary of our Soviet Embassy here and this comrade is our general counsel. We would like to have a little talk with you."

"I have nothing to say to you," I answered.

The man smiled winningly.

"But I have something to say to you. Surely you will not refuse to talk to a fellow countryman?"

I shrugged. The Assistant Director asked me to sit down. Still smiling, the first secretary started talking.

"Have you had a quarrel with any of the officers or men on board your ship?" he asked. "The ship is still waiting for you, you know."

I laughed.

"No quarrels," I said.

"Then why should you have run away?"

"I never wish to return to the Soviet Union," I said slowly. "No strength on earth will get me back there alive." It did me good to express myself so clearly in my own language to a man who represented the government I loathed. He was not disconcerted, however, but went on good humoredly.

"But this is ridiculous! You are a young man and have carried out missions of great importance. Your work is highly valued. There is a great future in store for you in the Soviet Union. Why, within a month or two you will get your rank as major."

"None of it attracts me. You may confer these honors on others, on the fools who are still prepared to pretend they really believe in the régime."

He laughed as a doctor laughs at a difficult patient. It was already beginning to irritate me.

"Your nerves have been strained," he said. "You have worked too hard and are worn out. You come back and I can guarantee that you will have a few weeks' holiday in the Caucasus to get your health back completely and then you will be very glad that you avoided making the biggest mistake of your life."

"My health is fine, as are my nerves, too, thank you," I said. "But you are a fool if you think I can believe in any guarantee you make. You cannot guarantee anything, except to lie. You are nothing but a little servant of your master. Nothing you say is worth as much as a cow pat."

He frowned slightly at this, but an expression of perplexed concern forced its way back on his face.

"What are we to tell your mother and brother Vladimir?" he asked.

"Tell them that I cannot take part in mass murders and mass enslavement of millions of people in order to secure a few years of existence for my beloved mother and brother in the Soviet paradise. If you kill my brother you will kill him, but it is better for him to die as a child than to suffer the torture of life under communism. However, I am sure you will tell them whatever your masters order you to tell them."

"You pretend to be unconcerned, but do you fully realize

what it means for them that you should desert the service of your motherland?"

"I realize perfectly."

"And you can so easily send your mother to Siberia?"

"There is nothing I can do to help now."

Then he began to shout at me and shake his fist in front of my face.

"You filthy traitor, degenerate son of an enemy of the people. You think your crime will go unpunished? You are wrong. There is nothing strong enough to hold down the arm of the MGB. You will be brought back to the Soviet Union cringing for mercy, and there will be no mercy. You are a dog and deserve none."

"Don't scream at me," I said in a bored voice. "This is not an interrogation room of the Lubianka."

But he went on. It was all nonsense and served no purpose. I turned to the Assistant Director and asked to be allowed to go back to my cell. He nodded his head and I stood up without a look at the raging first secretary and walked out of the room.

Three days later came the second note from the Soviet Ambassador.

"On further investigation in the U.S.S.R. concerning the motives for the strange action of Seaman Granovsky it has been discovered that he is wanted by the authorities for the crime of having robbed his mistress in Stalingrad.

"The Soviet Embassy insists that the Swedish authorities return Granovsky not only as a deserter but as a criminal so that the Soviet authorities can proceed with his punishment."

This note and the previous one just did not add up. They conflicted. Further, I had never even been to Stalingrad and, quite obviously, if I had been a thief I could not have been given a berth on a ship going abroad.

This note, coming after the first, helped me considerably.

Some seventeen days later, on the evening before the twenty-ninth anniversary of the Revolution, and the ninth anniversary of my father's arrest, I was brought to the office of the Superintendent of Criminal Investigation. He talked with me for a few minutes, but I could see that the purpose of my summons was not to be favored with his

little chat. Soon the door opened and a very distinguished-looking old man walked in. The Superintendent stood up and bowed, offering the visitor his chair. Without introduction the visitor then started to talk to me in just about the finest Russian it has been my pleasure to hear. It was the Russian of a very cultured man, a great scholar, and I listened with growing respect, for he had spoken Swedish to the Superintendent.

He did not interrogate me, but conversed with me for several hours. He asked about my family, the places I had lived in, the people I had known in the old days and now. There was a quality in him that brought me, somehow, out of myself as I spoke of the old days, of Marshal Tukhachevsky, Piatakov, Ordjonikidze, Litvinov, and I had the impression that he knew the men I spoke of.

When he finally stood up to go, he shook my hand and wished me luck. But I had no idea who he was. I asked the Superintendent, but he did not tell me.

Later that evening, a tall, red-headed officer who had befriended me, as it were, came to play a game of chess. I asked him if he knew who the old gentleman was, and he told me all about him.

He was a well known and highly honored expert on the Soviet Union and had been a counselor at the Royal Swedish Embassy in Moscow for many years. His name was Nils Lindh. Why had he talked to me? He had only talked, not interrogated at all. Why?

It appeared that the question of whether or not I should be granted asylum had gone up to the Swedish Cabinet for decision and was there put to the vote. Unfortunately, owing to the fact that Sweden was negotiating several commercial transactions with the Soviet Union, there was considerable feeling on the part of some members of the Cabinet against doing anything that would disturb the Soviet Government and thereby risk jeopardizing the trading agreements. When my question was put to the vote, there were several abstentions and the slight majority in my favor did not constitute a ruling vote. Mr. Tage Erlander, the Prime Minister, and Mr. Herman Zetterberg, the Royal Minister of Justice, who had both voted for me, decided then to put the question to His Majesty King Gustaf V of Sweden. His Majesty had considered the merits of my case and then appointed Mr. Nils Lindh to talk to me personally and give

his recommendation. It was very likely that the King would do as the old gentleman recommended.

"If he likes the look of you," said my friend, "you are safe. If not, you will be sent back."

"When will I know?" I asked.

"Tomorrow or the next day," he said.

And it was on the night of November 8, 1946, that the door to my freedom was opened.

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